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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Report of the Board of Inquiry on the currency speculations of certain Foreign Office officials was published this week, together with the decisions of the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary on its findings. The Report is divided into three parts. The first deals with the cases of Mr. J. D. Gregory, Mr. O'Malley, and Lieutenant-Commander Maxse; the second with the question whether other Civil Servants have been engaged in speculative transactions of any kind; and the third reopens the question of the Zinoviev letter. The Board are fully satisfied that the three gentlemen named above "neither used, nor endeavoured to use, any official information for the

purpose of their transactions," but they add that "by engaging in those transactions at all, these three persons acted, as it seems to us, in a manner inconsistent with their obligations as Civil Servants." In Mr. Gregory's case they find it difficult to see any circumstance of extenuation. Mr. O'Malley's speculations were on a much smaller scale than Mr. Gregory's, but he was "the initiator of the whole business." Commander Maxse only joined at a later stage in "a going concern" run by his two seniors, and in his case, therefore, the Board find "some extenuating circumstances." In Part II. the Board describe their exhaustive inquiries into all rumours of speculation by other Civil Servants, but have only to record two trifling incidents in both of which Foreign Office officials were again concerned. Part III. records that "there is not the slightest foundation for any of the suspicions which have . . . most unjustly attached to Mr. Gregory" in connection with the Zinoviev letter.

* * *

The decisions of Mr. Baldwin and Sir Austen Chamberlain on these findings are that Mr. Gregory is dismissed from the Service, Mr. O'Malley permitted to resign, and Commander Maxse severely reprimanded and deprived of three years' seniority. We discuss in our leading article the bearing of the Report on the reputation of the Civil Service. The Labour Party, however, is far more interested in its reflections on the Zinoviev affair, and Mr. MacDonald has secured from Mr. Baldwin the promise of half a day before Easter to discuss the matter. The Board satisfied themselves that Mr. Gregory was not concerned with any irregularity in this connection, but it was not within their terms of reference, if indeed it was in their power, to ascertain how the DAILY MAIL obtained a copy of the letter. This is, we understand, the chief question which the Labour Party is still anxious to clear up.

* * *

The discussions between the cotton employers and trade unions have undergone this week a welcome change. The employers have withdrawn their specific demands for longer hours and lower wages, and now propose merely that the questions of hours and wages should be considered in their place, among other factors entering into the cost of production, in the joint inquiry in which they invite the operatives to participate. It remains a little difficult to see what good purpose the proposed inquiry can fulfil. The Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organizations is a much more efficient organ for exploring the facts than an *ad hoc* and hasty inquiry, limited to the spinning and manufacturing sections, can possibly be; and it would seem altogether a more satisfactory plan, if genuine co-operation is desired, to associate the operatives with the work of this Joint Committee. But perhaps the inquiry proposed by the employers will lead to some such result.

In any case, it seems likely to prove a means of burying the employers' wages and hours demands without too much "loss of face." In these circumstances, the operatives would, in our judgment, be well advised to accept the employers' invitation.

* * *

Sir William Pope's warning as to the possible dangers of the new motor-spirit called "ethyl," to which we called attention in our leading article last week, has been reinforced by Professor H. B. Baker, the President of the Chemical Society. In a letter published in last Saturday's *TIMES* Professor Baker declares that Sir William Pope has understated the case against the use of lead tetraethyl in motor spirit.

"This substance," he writes, "does not act on the body as an ordinary lead poison, but it has a specific action which is very much more harmful. . . . Lead tetraethyl passes rapidly through the skin, is absorbed by the blood, and causes very severe nervous trouble. If sufficient is absorbed, death occurs in a few weeks. I may mention that one of my students, working on the substance in an American laboratory, with full knowledge of its danger and using all the precautions which that knowledge enjoined, was very seriously affected, and his illness lasted several months."

In Professor Baker's opinion, the extent of the dilution of this poison in motor spirit makes little difference;

"lead tetraethyl has a high boiling point, and if the mixture comes in contact with the hands (even in flooding a carburettor, this is often unavoidable) the volatile petrol will evaporate, leaving a film of the tetraethyl on the skin. Though the ordinary motorist would thus be in danger, his risk would not compare with that of those who serve in garages."

The attention of the Ministry of Health was called to the urgency of the matter more than a month ago.

* * *

Sir William Joynson-Hicks's answers to questions on this subject in the House of Commons were far from reassuring. Asked by Commander Kenworthy what steps he had taken to ascertain that no ill-effects would result from an extended use of petrol diluted with lead tetraethyl, he replied airily that the matter was outside the jurisdiction of the Home Office, but that no evidence had been discovered of any injury being caused from the use of the mixture to the public in the United States. Under pressure, he added that he would consult the Minister of Health, and see if the Department of Research could take the matter more fully in hand. On reading these answers, we thought it probable that Sir William had been speaking without previous consultation with Mr. Chamberlain, for it seemed incredible that the Ministry of Health, warned by the President of the Chemical Society, had not already investigated the matter in a thorough manner. The cat jumped out of the bag, however, when Lord Buckmaster, in the House of Lords, moved, in a vigorous speech, for a Committee "to advise as to the public danger that may arise from the use of lead tetraethyl in motor-spirit." This drew from Lord Salisbury a reluctant admission that nothing had been done, with the lame excuse that the Government had too much to do, and a promise that an inter-departmental committee should be appointed forthwith to investigate the matter. Lord Buckmaster then said that he did not want an inter-departmental committee, but a committee of eminent scientific men; and Lord Salisbury promised to deliver the message.

* * *

The Naval Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives has cut down the proposals of the Navy Department to an extent which reduces the estimated expenditure from £148 millions to under £55 millions. The Bill, as finally introduced, authorizes the construc-

tion, prior to July 1st, 1931, of fifteen cruisers and one aircraft carrier. The cruisers are to be laid down at the rate of five in each of the next three fiscal years. The President is authorized to suspend the execution of the programme, in whole or in part, if any agreement for limitation of naval armaments is actually concluded. Congress, of course, has the power to suspend the programme at any time by refusing to vote the annual appropriations. In almost every clause the Bill represents a compromise between the advocates and opponents of naval expansion, and, as a compromise, it is expected to pass practically unaltered. Meanwhile, Senator Borah has given notice of a resolution in favour of an international conference for the purpose of codifying the law relating to belligerent and neutral rights at sea, prior to the Naval Conference of 1931. This also is expected to pass in some form; but whether the United States Government will take any steps to give it practical effect is another matter, and may depend largely on the attitude of Great Britain.

* * *

There are three very strong reasons why Senator Borah's lead should be welcomed in this country. In the first place, the developments of recent years, both in the operations of war and in the mechanism of commerce have reduced maritime law to a state of confusion and uncertainty which might be equally embarrassing to Great Britain as a belligerent and as a neutral, and it is sheer lunacy to suppose that, in present conditions, the British views—whatever they may be—could be enforced without some backing in international agreement. In the second place, the question is inextricably bound up with the question of armament limitation, more especially as between Great Britain and the United States, and finally, the application of sanctions under the Covenant might very easily, in default of codification, involve the League, and more particularly Great Britain, in serious friction with America. The question is one of immense difficulty—the more so as all Powers, including the United States, are disposed to maintain, as belligerents, claims which they would strenuously deny as neutrals; but there can be no excuse for running away from it, and there is no wisdom in an ostrich-like blindness to its urgency.

* * *

For people who are so very certain of their own impeccability, the Fascists are extraordinarily sensitive to criticism. The treatment of the German-speaking minority in the Southern Tyrol has naturally provoked indignation in Austria; the question was raised in Parliament, and the Chancellor, Dr. Siepel, while disclaiming any idea of interfering in the domestic affairs of Italy and deprecating exaggeration of the charges, made a warm appeal to the Italian sense of justice and to the public opinion of the world. A number of Italian deputies thereupon put down questions as to this "disgraceful manifestation of hatred against Italy," and Signor Mussolini sent for Signor Auriti, the Italian Minister in Vienna. It is not yet clear whether this step is to be regarded as a definite recall of the Minister and rupture of negotiations; but the Fascist Press is already warning off the League with its customary insolence. Probably, however, Signor Mussolini has enough sense not to make another Corfu incident of the affair. Meanwhile, the League of Nations is also being criticized in Germany as a catspaw of France, because Mr. Cheng Lo, the President of the Council, interfered to prevent the sale of certain machine-gun parts smuggled into Hungary and seized by the Hungarian Government, pending League investigation. The French Press, on the other hand, is criticizing the League for its slowness to take action in the matter. Both sides fear the

creation of a precedent. What seems to emerge from all these warnings and criticisms is a growing realization of the League's effectiveness.

* * *

For four whole months the British and Egyptian Governments have been negotiating over the reserved points in the British declarations of 1922. The British Government's proposals are now being considered by the Wafd Committee, and Sir Austen Chamberlain has undertaken that the papers shall be published shortly. Rumour has it that the proposals will be rejected; if this is so, the Sudan is presumably the stumbling block. Even if the negotiations break down, however, they may be renewed in the near future; for the Wafd has shown, during the last few months, a new sense of what negotiation means. The proposals now officially communicated to the Wafd Committee have presumably been known in substance to the Wafd leaders for some time past; but the discussions have not been hampered by premature intervention. The Wafd leaders have learned much from sharing the responsibilities of government, and they know that a settled country cannot return, even at eight-year intervals, to the forcing methods of 1919 and 1920.

* * *

The general election in Japan will have little effect on the country's foreign policy, which Professor Webster discusses on another page this week; if it has any effect at all it will be to confirm the present attitude of abstention from interference in Chinese affairs, and supporting Japanese interests in Manchuria, in so far as that can be done without open partisanship of one of the Chinese factions. The Japanese Government and Opposition parties have very nearly divided the poll; the thirty odd deputies who represent independent groups are so divided that they could not possibly combine effectively for the purpose of forming a third party. The Labour candidates—in spite of the very bad factory conditions in Japan, have secured very few seats. A programme of Labour legislation does not appeal strongly to Eastern workmen, who still count on the ties and obligations of the old family system to relieve them in bad times.

* * *

It is always dangerous to forecast the course of Chinese politics; but it can be said confidently that the prospects of some kind of agreement between Great Britain and the southern provinces are improving daily. Sir Miles Lampson has just visited Canton, recently the nursery of anti-British boycotts and demonstrations. The municipality gave him an enormous banquet, and General Li Chai-sun made a speech to the effect that, if Great Britain would stick to her present policy, all would go well. After that Li Chai-sun had luncheon with the British consul, and declared, in the classical style of the old Imperial edicts: "Misunderstandings are cleared up, cordial relations are restored, British goods are welcomed." This utterance, circulated over the southern provinces in carefully selected combinations of ideographs, will have a great effect. It implies that the merchant community of Canton are at last able to exert effective influence on the Government, and if they are faithful to their old trading traditions they will drive a fair bargain and adhere to it scrupulously.

* * *

The TIMES, finding itself in an untenable position in its attack on the League of Nations Union, has prudently and expeditiously withdrawn. Last week it told us that "a Union which professes to be a non-party organization is acting with impropriety when it presses

upon its adherents a particular policy known to be unacceptable to the Government of the day." This week it declares that "there is no objection in principle to its criticizing the Government of the day." This is a concession for which the Union will no doubt be grateful; and we do not think that any responsible member of the Union will quarrel with the further statement that, "acting as a body," it "ought not to be dominated by any conspicuous party tendency." This is sound doctrine for any non-party organization, and there is not the smallest danger that it will be violated by the Union which is under the direction of Lord Cecil, Professor Gilbert Murray, and Major J. W. Hills.

* * *

An admirable object-lesson of the corrupting influence of Protection has been given during the last few days by the French Chamber. The great increases proposed by the Government in a tariff already too high have provoked protests on the part of a certain number of papers, which have at last discovered the existence of the consumer, and, when the debate on the new tariff began, there was a certain hesitation in the Chamber about adopting the increased duties. It soon, however, yielded to the pressure of the "interests," which are organized, whereas the consumers are not. Since no deputy dared to vote against the "interests" in his own constituency, the proceedings degenerated into shameless bargaining at the public expense. "I will vote for raising the duty on wine if you will vote for raising it on green peas." In many cases it was not even pretended that the duties were necessary. For example, M. Barthe, who represents Socialism and the winegrowers, did not deny that the poor vintage had made the production of wine insufficient for the home consumption and consequently raised prices, but he insisted that the duty on wine must be raised in the same proportion as other duties and he got his way. Bananas were taxed for the purpose of protecting Norman pears and apples, and among the new duties adopted was one on live turtles! This is what we shall come to if "safeguarding" is much further extended.

* * *

Our attention has been drawn to an appeal to the Belgian Chamber, signed by a number of prominent people in various countries, asking that Dr. August Borms and other condemned Flemish leaders shall be granted unconditional amnesty. The facts are that during the German occupation of Belgium Dr. Borms and his associates accepted the help of the invaders to set up an administration in Flanders distinct from that of the Belgian State. They did not, like the Irish, Czech, and Polish Nationalists, take up arms against their Government—there was no occasion for them to do so—but they did take advantage of the embarrassment of Belgium to forward their separatist ideas. It is not surprising, therefore, that when Germany was defeated they were prosecuted and severely punished, though it is not alleged that they had acted from other than idealistic motives. The anomalous feature of the affair is that, while the great majority of his associates have served their sentences and been released, a few are still in exile, and Dr. Borms himself remains in prison. It is true that he has been offered liberty on condition that he will abstain from taking part in politics, and his rejection of this bargain has naturally made him a heroic figure in the eyes of his fellow Flemings. The case for an amnesty seems uncommonly strong, but the Committee appointed by the Belgian Chamber to consider the matter is apparently incapable of reaching a decision, and meanwhile Flemish Nationalists grow more and more restive.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

IF certain highly placed officials in the Foreign Office have been guilty of a deplorable departure from the high standards of propriety traditional in the Civil Service—an offence for which they have received severe, though not too severe, punishment—the Report of the Board of Inquiry, presided over by Sir Warren Fisher, is in the very highest traditions of the Service, and reflects honour upon it. Nothing could be more unfair or perverse than to suggest, as we see is suggested in certain quarters, that the Report is essentially a white-washing affair, that the investigations have not been sufficiently searching, and that there remain, in all probability, various dark matters which have not been revealed. Such suggestions represent, doubtless, the aftermath of the complaint that the Inquiry ought to have been of a judicial character, and should have been held in public. The Report is itself the best possible answer to this complaint. The second of its three parts is devoted to the question of whether any other Civil Servants, besides those whose names were mentioned in the case of *Ironmonger & Co. v. Dyne*, had been guilty of similar transactions. In investigating this matter the Board of Inquiry have, it seems, explored every rumour, however idle it might seem, however unsupported by evidence, bringing the rumour to the notice of the Civil Servant concerned, and demanding to know whether he had done anything which might supply a basis for the rumour. This represents a far more searching and comprehensive procedure than would have been possible for a judicial inquiry or for any inquiry meeting in public.

The contents of the Report make it plain, moreover, that, so far from being animated by any desire to hush matters up, the Board of Inquiry have been austere and conscientious in revealing every "undesirable" transaction of which they have found evidence. They discovered that Sir Miles Lampson, over seven years ago, when a First Secretary in the Foreign Office, purchased jointly with his wife £1,000 worth of French francs, which he sold some months later at a profit. "Both the purchase and the sale were cash transactions and were made through his bank in London, and there is no question of any official information being used." But "the francs were not bought for family or holiday purposes, but in the hope of an appreciation in value," and the Board of Inquiry have felt bound, accordingly, to record the transaction and to describe it as "undesirable" in a member of the Diplomatic Service. There could be no more convincing proof of the stern conscientiousness with which they have discharged their task. Obviously, Sir Miles Lampson's transaction was a trifling and essentially harmless one, bearing no real analogy to the systematic, large-scale, quasi-professional exchange speculations of Mr. Gregory and his associates, or even to the more limited speculations of Mr. Villiers. What need, then, it might not unfairly have been pleaded, to drag in Sir Miles Lampson's name at all? The fact that the Board of Inquiry have been deaf to such pleas shows conclusively that they are shielding no one and keeping nothing back.

If, then, we totally reject the suggestion that the

Report is lacking in thoroughness and candour, are there any grounds for supporting the opposite school of critics who regard it as unduly meticulous and severe? We do not think so. Sir Warren Fisher and his two colleagues were dealing with a serious breach in the great traditions of the Service to which they belong. They were rightly concerned to ascertain beyond question how far that breach had extended through their ranks. Only by the most searching investigation and exposure could they satisfy themselves and demonstrate to the nation that the fault was confined to three or four individuals in a single Department, and that the integrity of the Service as a whole was as unassailable as ever. For it must be remembered that the lofty standards of conduct required by the Board of Inquiry are not of the character of copy-book maxims laid down by departmental chiefs, but the actual code accepted and invariably followed by Civil Servants of all grades. It is impossible, therefore, to exaggerate the importance of upholding and vindicating that code, particularly when it had been infringed by men in high places. The Civil Service is the custodian of its own honour, and for this reason also it was right and proper that the inquiry should be conducted by leading Civil Servants.

The whole incident should serve to remind the British public of facts which they are too apt to take for granted—that the Civil Service is one of the greatest of our national assets, that it preserves a standard of integrity far higher than that prevailing in ordinary business circles, and that its efficiency and public spirit are without parallel in any other country. It is not, of course, possible to make any direct comparison between the ethics of the City and those of Whitehall; the circumstances are too dissimilar. But the use sometimes made of inside information by business men is certainly not such as would commend itself to the writers of this Report. The officials in this case have been acquitted of the charge of making use of secret information for private ends; but even that offence would not, we suspect, be taken very seriously in some business circles. The fact that only one of the four speculators succeeded in making a profit, while the net losses of the others were very heavy, would probably be thought the most damaging part of the revelations. In the Treasury and the other State Departments, however, the feeling that Civil Servants ought not to expose themselves to public criticism by speculation is, in the words of the Report, "elementary and axiomatic." It is of vital importance that it should be so, for if public confidence in the purity of the Civil Service were shaken, a marked deterioration in our national life would be the inevitable result. Happily there is nothing in the Report of the Board of Inquiry tending to shake that confidence, while there is much that should strengthen and confirm it. The Treasury, the Revenue Departments, the Post Office, the Board of Trade—in all of which there are poorly paid officials in a position to profit from the illicit use of official information—all emerge stainless from a searching examination. Only the Foreign Office is not above suspicion, and there we may well be suffering from a mistaken method of selecting officials which has already been modified but still leaves traces of its influence on the traditions of the place.

Finally, a word should be said as to the way in which this matter has been handled by Mr. Baldwin and Sir Austen Chamberlain. These Ministers, like the members of the Board of Inquiry, had a painful duty to perform. They are humane men, and we may be sure that they would gladly have been lenient if they had conceived that leniency was consistent with their duty. It is easy to say after the event that they had no alternative but to publish the Report and to deal severely with the persons censured therein. There can be no doubt that that was the right course. Instances are not lacking, however, of reports which have been held up, while rumour was busy with their contents, owing to a mistaken idea that publication would be more damaging than suppression. Other instances might be found in which reports have been "edited" before publication. We owe it therefore to the responsible Ministers as well as to Sir Warren Fisher and his colleagues that this affair has been dealt with in a way which redounds to the credit of the Civil Service as a whole.

JAPAN AT THE CROSS ROADS

[The writer of the following article, C. K. Webster, is Wilson Professor of International Politics in the University of Wales and author of "The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh" and other works on diplomatic history. It is part of the duty of the Wilson Professor to travel abroad, and Professor Webster has recently returned from a visit to the Far East.—ED., THE NATION.]

BEFORE the war, and in a sense during the war, Japan made Germany her principal model. She found there more than in any other country the scientific and technical efficiency which she needed, and the discipline that marked German civilization was more congenial to her than the individualism of Britain or the United States. The loyalty to State and Emperor, so necessary to her own unity and progress, was to be found in Germany more than in any other Western State. The influence of the soldier, the official, and the aristocrat was similar to that in new Japan. Thus, though the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, no less than her old score against Germany, made it essential for her to join the Allied side, her statesmen hardly expected, some perhaps did not hope, that it would win, certainly not that it would win an overwhelming victory.

Thus when the victory came it made all the more impression on Japan because it was unexpected. Something had been wrong in her calculations. She must reconsider her whole scheme of life and import a good deal more democracy than she had hitherto admitted. Big business and the machine obviously played a big rôle in this democracy. Their influence must therefore be accepted more completely in her own political life. Her social, economic, and foreign policy must be adapted to the new doctrines whose strength had been revealed by the result of the war.

The process has been a painful one, and it is not yet certain that the Japanese can and will carry it out to its logical conclusion. It conflicts far more than the semi-democracy of pre-war times with her age-long habits. The Crown is in Japan something very different from anything that exists elsewhere in the world, and the forces which have resisted the transfer to popular control of some of the prerogatives of the Crown are more powerful than in Western countries. A mysterious sanctity still surrounds the Imperial House, whose strength no one can adequately gauge, and which many Japanese of all classes are reluctant

to remove. It is best felt, perhaps, by the traveller when he visits the Shinto shrines at Yamada, of which it has been said that there is nothing to see and no one is allowed to see it, yet whose simple austerity produces an impression of sublime and potent influence. To them come each successive Japanese Ministry to announce to the Imperial ancestors that it has assumed the responsibility of Government. The Temple of Heaven lies neglected and desolate, but these shrines are still visited by countless worshippers, who make their obeisance and recite their prayer before the impassive gaze of Japanese sentries, armed with the most modern equipment.

One can understand therefore the doubt and hesitation that is obviously characteristic of Japan to-day. Will it be possible for her to maintain the old loyalty and discipline of her people? Power must pass more completely than before to those who can organize and lead the new democracy. The restraining influence of the aristocratic and military leaders must grow less and less. Profound changes may take place in the outlook of the whole nation.

At the same time Japan is faced with a tremendous revolution in her economic life. The increase of her population, though it may be gradually checked by modern civilization, can only be absorbed for some time to come by a process of industrialization. Her whole financial system has been so strained by the losses of the earthquake that it needs much readjustment before it can supply the necessary machinery for this new industrial life. Japan has only just begun to face financial problems with which we have been only too familiar since 1920. She has some hard decisions to make in connection with them.

Foreign policy has also to be changed. Its process must be made to fit in with the new aspects of Japanese political life and brought into accord with the ideas which dominate the post-war world. Above all, the attitude of Japan towards China has to be readjusted. Japan shared in the universal madness produced by the war, and for a time she was left in almost undisputed control of the destinies of China. Had her plans succeeded, Japan would have been dominant at Peking and master of the destinies of the Chinese Empire. But it soon became apparent that such a development was beyond her resources and her strength of will. When peace came and her position was challenged, not only by the Chinese but by her former Allies and the United States, she hastened to withdraw. The Washington Conference not only deprived Japan of the Alliance with Britain, but definitely curtailed her rights in China. She abandoned Shantung and made the same promises to the Chinese regarding Treaty rights as the other Powers. But Manchuria, which she had obtained by the expenditure of so much blood and treasure, she has tried to keep separate from the rest of China and to a certain extent succeeded. By her command of the Southern Manchurian railway with the zones and concessions attached to it, she had obtained the economic control of a vast territory. That control is considered essential to Japan by all classes of people, and its protection is the first charge on her foreign policy. Since Manchuria can never be colonized by the Japanese, and, indeed, is now receiving nearly 1,000,000 Chinese immigrants a year, it remains a problem of great magnitude.

Towards China proper Japan has adopted an opportunist policy. At times she has posed as an Oriental Power sympathizing with the Chinese in their efforts to shake off Western dominance. When circumstances caused Britain to be the main object of attack in China, she was careful to give no assistance, an attitude partly dictated, no doubt, by her natural resentment at the manner in which the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was terminated. But she was stiffer than the European Powers in granting the fulfilment

of Chinese demands. She had, indeed, far more at stake. Her trade with China was more important to her than theirs to them, and more liable to competition by the Chinese themselves. It is not surprising therefore that at the Tariff Conference of 1925, while she joined with the other Powers in asserting the principle of Chinese autonomy, she was opposed to any practical steps in that direction. And when the Washington surcharges were at last taken by China and granted by the other Powers Japan refused to put them into force at ports which she controls. Indeed, in every point connected with China she has clung more vigorously to her treaties than Britain or even the United States.

The Chinese bring other charges against her. Many of them think that she wishes to prevent China regaining unity. The War Lords of the North, they assert, are protected and assisted by her because she knows that a Nationalist China would mean the end of her dominance in Manchuria. It was for this reason, they claim, that Japan sent four thousand troops last spring to Shantung when the Nationalists were in the full tide of success, and, if these did not affect the situation directly, their presence had an important influence on the morale of the Northern and Southern forces.

The dispatch of these troops was indeed subjected to severe criticism in Japan itself by the Liberal Press, and Baron Tanaka has found it difficult to defend his policy. But to read in it a Machiavellian plot to prevent China from becoming a nation, as many Chinese do, is a grotesque exaggeration. For one thing, such a policy is not necessary in the present state of China, and the Japanese are the last people to show their hand too soon. Nor, if we are to judge the Japanese by their Press, could such a policy be pursued for long in the Japan of to-day. There is too much sympathy with China amongst the Japanese for any Government to incur the odium of deliberately preventing the restoration of order and unity in China. Nevertheless, when the possibilities of a united China are considered and its historical differences with Japan are remembered, it can be well understood that there is no anxiety in Japan to hasten the advent of a powerful neighbour on her flank. It is not likely, therefore, that she will do more in China than follow events, keeping in the background as much as possible, and taking advantage of the inevitable friction between China and the other Powers to conceal the precariousness of her own position.

This position of danger is the main factor governing Japanese relations with Russia. There is still much newspaper talk of a clash between Japan and Russia in Manchuria, but it is a mistaken interpretation of events there. On the contrary, Japan is seeking Russian friendship partly because of her situation in Manchuria. Eastern Siberia is also important to her as a great fishing ground, and her fear of Bolshevik propaganda in the East has now much weakened. It is probable, therefore, that coming years will see Japan's relations with Russia grow continually closer and more friendly.

If this development takes place it will mean a great reversal of Japanese policy, but it should not be connected with any design against other Powers. On the contrary, Japan probably exaggerates the strength of both Britain and the United States. Though her pride has been deeply wounded by the absurd policy of the United States in 1924, yet she needs at this moment financial assistance so badly that the last thing she would contemplate is a quarrel in that quarter of the world. In any controversy that arises between Britain and the United States she will keep studiously neutral, though her sympathies would more likely be on our side, however policy made it necessary for her to conceal them.

In this connection it should be noted that Japan's interest in the League is growing. She has regarded it naturally as mainly a European affair and not likely to be used in her own immediate concerns. But she has been attracted by its objects, has done much to popularize it amongst her people, and is ready to take advantage of it if it seriously contemplates world policies. Any programme for extending the machinery of peace in the Pacific must take account of the fact that both Japan and the Dominions are members of the League. As a result of many conversations with Japanese officials and public men, I believe that Japan would welcome any effort to strengthen its influence in that region as giving to her prestige and protection which it is difficult for her to obtain in any other way.

It can be seen, therefore, that Japan is facing big decisions. In her political, social, and economic life she is cutting loose from old moorings. She is readjusting the whole of her foreign policy. Much depends on whether she accepts as fundamental what we may call a "liberal" policy in all these matters. Perhaps more than any other country, though, of course, the policy of every country is a function of the policies of others, she will be influenced by the progress of liberal ideas elsewhere. There is a strong tendency towards internal reconstruction and international co-operation. But if other Powers are so foolish as to rely on old shibboleths, it is not Japan that will refuse to take up a challenge.

C. K. WEBSTER.

THE L.C.C. ELECTIONS

THE triennial elections for the London County Council will be held next Thursday, March 8th, when, for the first time, the Liberal Party, as represented by its official organization in London, the London Liberal Federation, will be responsible for running a body of candidates. Indeed, this will be the first occasion on which the name Liberal has been used in connection with L.C.C. candidatures, for hitherto Liberals have only fought Council elections as members of the Progressive Party, which was reduced, at the 1925 elections, to six elected members, and which now no longer exists as an organization, having "ceased upon the midnight without sound" somewhere about the month of June, 1925.

To many people it always seems unreasonable that candidates for local administrative bodies should be elected under a party label, and that division of opinion in local administration should necessarily follow the lines of national politics. The Progressive Party was an attempt to unite, for the good of London, energetic and progressively minded persons of all parties, or of no party. At one time there were among the Progressives men who were Labour, or even Conservative, in national matters; but for many years past this had ceased to be so, and "Progressive" was lately, in fact, synonymous with "Liberal." The Conservatives were the first to break away from the non-party ideal (though even to-day they pay lip-service to it by calling themselves Municipal Reformers—most unsuitable of names!), and their example was followed by the Labour Party. This action made it inevitable that Liberalism should organize itself to contest the L.C.C. elections on party lines, unless it was to be admitted that no Liberal should be allowed to take part in the administration of London—a conclusion which no one, who knows the difficulty of getting a good type of Councillor to serve his County or Borough, could view with equanimity. London is not rich enough in voluntary public servants to be able so to restrict its field of choice. And, moreover,

Liberals could not be expected to suffer meekly such exclusion from the life of their own city. The only thing was, therefore, to face the inevitable with vigour and resource, and to ensure, by winning adequate representation of Liberalism on the Council, that London should regain something of the spirit, though nothing of the form, of non-party administration.

This article has to be written before the close of nominations, and it is therefore impossible to state exactly the number of candidates who will offer themselves for election; but approximately the position is this. London is divided into sixty two-member divisions and one—the City—returning four members. There are therefore one hundred and twenty-four members to be elected, and the Conservatives are making the somewhat theatrical gesture of nominating a candidate for every seat. The Liberals have eighty-two candidates, and possibly there may be one or two more nominated at the last moment. The Labour Party will also put up something over eighty officially recognized candidates; the exact number I do not know, but eighty-one were announced a fortnight or so ago, and no doubt some others have been added to that total. It is clear, therefore, that each of the three big political parties is offering itself as a possible government for London, if the voters will only give it their support. As regards the Labour Party, however, the position is complicated by the deep and bitter quarrels that have split many of the London branches over the question of the exclusion of the Communists from membership. The result of these quarrels is that in many of the constituencies rival branches—unofficial and official, red and pink—are in existence, and that some twenty Left Wing candidates, whose sharpest hatred and invective are reserved for the official nominees, are putting up for the L.C.C. Sometimes the result is not unamusing to outsiders, as, for example, in Chelsea, where two representatives of "Trades Council and Labour" are opposed to two representatives of "Labour and Trades Council"—a state of affairs which seriously-minded Labour supporters find profoundly depressing.

Such being the approximate strength of the parties before the poll, what, as briefly as may be, are the main issues which should influence the electors in deciding which party to support? And what, in particular, is the position of Liberalism in regard to the government and administration of London?

The Liberal case can be divided into two parts, the defects of the other two parties, and the merits—as we believe—of Liberalism itself. Let us consider the less important part, the defects of others, first.

Stated broadly, and in a few words, the main argument against the Labour Party is that it cares more for using London administrative bodies in general, and the L.C.C. in particular, for the purpose of making experiments in Socialism, than for sound administration or useful reforms. The London Labour Party, in other words, looks at the city's problems through eyes that see everything in the uniform hue of a rigid political theory. It is felt, too, that they are lacking in imagination, and are not, apparently, able to originate the bold schemes of reform which are so urgently needed to rescue London from the chaos in which its administration at present lies. Yet even more seriously are people's minds prejudiced against the Labour Party because of the recent behaviour of certain London Borough Councils and Boards of Guardians which Labour controls. Such bodies in London have at various times been corrupt or pettily tyrannous, and no party has been without unworthy representatives. But it is true to say that London has never known anything like the organized corruption and tyranny which have been shown by certain

Labour Councils and Boards. No one dreams of thinking that the leaders of the Labour Party in London—Mr. Herbert Morrison, for instance—are responsible for this deplorable state of affairs, but, on the other hand, they are evidently quite incapable of putting an end to it or even of sensibly ameliorating it. This, perhaps, is an even greater weight round the neck of the Labour Party, in its attempt to capture the London County Council, than the divisions in its own ranks and its troubles with the Communists.

Against the Municipal Reformers, or Conservatives, the main accusation is that they have been consistently lacking in foresight. It is this that vitiates their much-trumpeted claim to be the party of economy; for they have never been able to recognize the moment favourable, from a financial point of view, to the carrying out of a particular piece of work. Or, to put it another way, they have never realized that delay in carrying out necessary work merely increases the need for it and, therefore, increases also its price. For example, the Conservatives, by refusing twenty years ago to build a County Hall costing, perhaps, a million pounds, have since been forced to build one at a cost of four millions; and by ceasing in 1907 the building of houses which cost, on an average, £295 a piece they have increased their present necessity of building houses costing a thousand pounds or more each. They have not always tackled a job badly in the end, but that end has nearly always been too long delayed. "Municipal Reform" has been astoundingly lacking in vision, and it is true to say, as Sir Herbert Samuel said, that since they captured the County Council in 1907 not one important innovation has been made in London. Detailed work, some of it quite good, some of it bad, there has been in plenty, but not one thing showing either imagination or remarkable executive ability.

Lord Oxford, a very short time before his death, on being told of the Liberal preparations for the L.C.C. elections, asked this: "Is any question of principle involved?" And it is, fundamentally, because questions of principle are involved, that this campaign is justified. Differences of detail between the Liberal Party and its two—or three—rivals there are many, but there are differences of principle also, and the greatest of these is that which concerns the whole form of London government. Liberals believe not only in a Greater London, not only that the present boundaries of the county (which exclude, for example, even such places as Wood Green and Chiswick) are illogical and far too narrow, but that the welfare of the city (that word being written with a small c) suffers very greatly from the too wide diffusion of authority within it. There are far too many administrative bodies in London, and many of them have powers which should be in the hands of the central body, the County Council. It has always been the Conservative policy to strengthen the minor bodies at the expense of the central one; the Metropolitan Borough Councils were, indeed, created expressly to prevent a Progressive County Council from becoming too strong. The Labour Party, also, likes the multiplicity of administrative bodies, for, while it knows that it has no chance of controlling a Council representing London as a whole, it can, and does, capture for its own uses a large number of the Borough Councils and Boards of Guardians. But this state of affairs, though it may be popular with Labour and Tory politicians, means confusion, divided control, unequal rating, varying standards of health-services, and a hundred other disadvantages for London as a whole. It means that while one Borough may do something towards solving the housing problem, another may do nothing at all. It means inefficiency and sometimes disaster, as we can learn by noting that the conditions which resulted

in the recent floods, and in their accompanying loss of life, were not within the province of one single authority, but of five or six. The County Council, the Port of London Authority, the Westminster City Council and other Councils, the Thames Conservancy, all—and none—were responsible. The floods were, indeed, a dramatic example of what is continually happening to London, and to the lives of its citizens, under the present system. It is not, perhaps, now possible entirely to sweep away all the smaller local administrative bodies; but it is because Liberalism stands for a Greater London and for a more coherent administration of the whole area, for a greater centralization of power and responsibility, that the Liberal Party in London is sharply divided, in principle as well as in matters of detailed practice, from its rivals.

Not too much must be hoped from the present elections, for London Liberalism has to begin from the very bottom. Yet there are a number of seats—perhaps thirty—where the Liberal chances are good. If only a modest proportion of these is won, if even a dozen or twenty Liberal Councillors are returned, a very good beginning will have been made, and there will be on the Council a vigorous expression of Liberal opinion which will certainly lead to more seats, and perhaps a majority of the Council, being won in 1931. It is therefore abundantly worth the while of all Liberals, having a vote in London, to overcome the forgetfulness that habitually afflicts London voters on Council polling days, and to record their votes on March 8th. After all, voters who abstain have no right to grumble at the result of an election.

I. A. WILLIAMS.

MOVING-WING FLIGHT

IT is curious, in these days of protuberant publicity, that a rapid and portentous improvement in a revolutionary aeronautical invention should have been achieved almost unnoticed by the public.

Yet while the dining saloons, lounges, smoking-rooms, and promenade decks of the two gas bags, R 100 and R 101, are constantly mentioned, and while the banks of the Thames are lined with cheering crowds when Sir Alan J. Cobham sets off to prove once more that boats and trains are faster than aircraft, little notice is taken of the really astonishing progress that has been made with the Cierva Autogiro.

When the autogiro flew at Farnborough on October 19th, 1925, the journalistic spot lights were momentarily focused upon it; but since then it has lost its news value.

Yet the autogiro is perhaps the most perfect example of the bookish invention. It is the kind of invention that novelists often try to invent. There was not the usual long fumbling for improvement during which, in most real mechanical discoveries, surprise and wonder fade. At one leap the autogiro sprang from ideas into actuality.

And some believe that it will eventually oust the conventional type of fixed-wing heavier-than-air flying machine altogether. Nearly all who have studied its flight and have watched some of the recent models manœuvring in the air, agree that the autogiro is destined to play some important part in the air communications of the future.

For there are certain valuable manœuvres which the autogiro, alone among aircraft, is able to perform. For example, an autogiro having a top speed of about 100 m.p.h., can land on a patch of ground 15 yards square; it can virtually hover, it can descend almost vertically, and, provided means are available for spinning the wings, it can take off in a shorter distance than an aeroplane having the same top speed.

The autogiro can perform these manœuvres solely because, unlike the aeroplane, it is a moving-wing flying machine, it uses its wings like birds use their wings.

Birds possess a wide speed range and great powers of manœuvre. They are able to defeat fog, gale, and snow, to land upon a twig and to take off from a twig. They owe their ability to do these things to their use of moving wings. The bird moves its wings relative to its body and may be subsumed with the autogiro in the category of moving-wing flying machines.

The aeroplane is a fixed-wing flying machine; it employs a means of obtaining lift which is ignored by the Creator. It holds itself up by driving wings and body forward through the air. If the body stops moving through the air the wings stop and cease to exert lift and the machine "stalls" and falls towards the ground. In birds and autogiros the body can stop moving through the air while the wings continue to move through the air and to exert lift.

It was in the search for this desirable ability to move wings without moving body that so many penurious inventors exercised their overdrafts upon the design and construction of ornithopters and helicopters. But the autogiro, although it can do almost all that it was hoped some helicopter might be able to do, differs fundamentally from the helicopter.

The helicopter uses power to screw itself up into the air, the four moving wings of the autogiro are not power-driven. They are popularly and correctly called a windmill. They are free to rotate upon a main shaft stepped like a mast in the fuselage. Moreover the wings or windmill blades are not rigid as are the blades of a helicopter screw, nor are they braced like aeroplane wings. They are articulated at their roots and are free to move up and down.

The autogiro is drawn forward like an aeroplane by the usual type of engine and airscrew and the relative wind blows the windmill round. Centrifugal force (to give it its popular name) holds the blades out and braces them to take the lift. As they travel towards the nose of the machine the blades rise slightly, and as they travel towards the tail they fall.

Two beautiful examples of natural balance are to be noted in this system of flight. First, the rotation of the windmill automatically braces the blades so that no "flying" or "lift" wires are needed; second, the blades rise and fall by precisely the amount needed to make the machine stable.

Surely these two harmonies are gifts of nature to the inventor; all parts of the puzzle of mechanical moving-wing flight seem suddenly to have fallen into place. And the practical results of applying this principle of flight are already significant.

Although Señor Don Juan de la Cierva has been working on aeronautics for about seventeen years, it was not until 1920 that he first conceived the plan of the autogiro. The invention blossomed with the fourth machine to be constructed which had articulated windmill blades.

Autogiros have now been built with both water-cooled and air-cooled engines of high and low powers. They have been tried with two-bladed, three-bladed, and four-bladed windmills, and with blades of different shapes. They are gradually ridding themselves of aeroplane influence and developing individuality. Undercarriages specially designed for almost vertical landings are being substituted for modified aeroplane undercarriages which are more suited to tangential landings.

An altogether new conception of man-carrying flight comes to those who watch some of the latest types manœuvring. With the windmill rotating the machine will

rise from the ground as if it were being picked up by a crane. It will fly at 100 m.p.h., and then poise itself almost stationary close to one of the aerodrome buildings while the pilot looks through a second-story office window. It will then sink on to the ground and not run five yards. Its movements suggest the quiet, controlled, submissive flight that man has long desired; the antithesis of the compulsory rush and roar of fixed-wing flight.

The autogiro is, indeed, a wonderful and pregnant invention; an invention that may yet make necessary a complete change in existing aeronautical notions.

OLIVER STEWART.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE headline "Political Tide Flowing to Labour" over Mr. MacDonald's after-dinner speech to the clerks roused expectations that were not satisfied by further study. I expected to find Mr. MacDonald indulging in one of his rare moods of jubilation. He certainly said something like the headline, but it was in odd contrast to the rest of the speech, which was distinctly doleful. It was a flowing tide of tears, spilt over the recent by-elections. Mr. MacDonald is evidently thoroughly disappointed with the performances of his candidates. I should have thought that he might have found some slight consolation in the undoubted fact that the Labour poll has always increased, however slightly. The governing consideration for him however is that Labour shows no sign of making big conquests of new territory. Unless Labour can do that there is no prospect whatever of an independent majority, and Mr. MacDonald knows it. The difficulty remains unchanged; a party tied to one class can hardly hope successfully to conciliate all the classes and to persuade the nation as a whole that it will be safe in that party's keeping. The recent by-elections produce no evidence that Labour is breaking new ground in the semi-urban or the rural constituencies. Mr. MacDonald allowed his realization of this disagreeable fact to escape him, and then, with characteristic inconsequence, he concluded that the Tide is flowing to Labour. It is a Mediterranean tide.

The Gregory Report has brought that first-class political mystery, the Red Letter, back into discussion. It is apparently as insoluble as "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." The more it is explained, the more it needs explanation. Labour ingeminates forgery, and certainly definite proofs of authenticity have never been furnished. There is no reason why it should have been forgery; or at least if it was one no injustice was done to Zinoviev. Clearly the Foreign Office people were convinced that it was genuine, and so presumably was Mr. MacDonald. Otherwise surely he would have stamped on it at the start; he would not have talked about publication and proceeded to correct the official letter of protest. That is mystery Number One. Mystery Number Two, the hasty publication on October 24th, is left equally unsolved, except on the assumption that it was considered all important to forestall the DAILY MAIL. I doubt whether the public inquiry for which the Labour Press is asking would get to the bottom of it now. Sir Eyre Crowe is dead and cannot tell us whether or no he considered that Mr. MacDonald had authorized publication and whether the circulation in Fleet Street forced immediate issue. The Gregory report seems to throw the responsibility entirely on him. He may have committed an error of judgment, and if so no one (certainly not Mr. MacDonald) would blame a very upright and disinterested public servant, who was certainly acting in good faith. There was nothing remarkable in the Zinoviev letter

—doubtless the Foreign Office had plenty of such documents—what was remarkable was the accident of its publication at that moment setting off so destructive a political mine.

* * *

An ingenious writer in a Sunday newspaper recently announced that the Liberal Party has "definitely disappeared." The news seems to have been late in reaching Ilford, for at the election there no less than fourteen thousand people voted for the party in the belief that it still exists. The significance of that election was that it showed a very substantial part of the electorate in a London Tory suburb turning to the Liberal Party in a movement of revolt from the Government. Labour offered itself as the "only" alternative in vain, in spite of a large addition of working-class voters since 1924. The result is ominous for the Government. This is the kind of victory which is as damaging as a defeat. By a majority of the votes cast Ilford, of all places, declared itself against Mr. Baldwin, and his candidate sneaks into Parliament as one more minority member. This kind of thing may be expected to continue until something is done about a reform in the method of voting. Ilford was a valuable encouragement to the Liberal campaign. The job of the Party between now and the General Election is, I take it, to convince the country that Liberalism does exist as a solid and satisfactory alternative to Toryism—and it is doing it very well. I should suppose this to be too obvious for statement, but for the gratuitous mourning of Sunday newspapers.

* * *

At the Liberal Council meeting the other day a scholar praised Lord Grey's oratory as possessing the classical qualities of simplicity and lucidity. With it was contrasted the "flashy and deceiving rhetoric" of other speakers. (No names were given, but I think Sherlock Holmes is not required: it will be sufficient to call in Dr. Watson.) I like Lord Grey's way of speaking myself, but I should put it rather differently. Of all public speakers Lord Grey is the most conversational. He is always perfectly definite in what he means to say, but he leaves its expression to the copious flow of improvisation. Selection seems to be impossible to him. He pours it out like a man with plenty of time before him in which to empty his mind. If form is part of the classical equipment, then Lord Grey is not a classical speaker. The long straggling sentences do in the end succeed in convincing you that you are overhearing the painfully acquired but absolutely genuine and personal thoughts of a man of transparent character. I have heard many of Lord Grey's speeches, but I have never carried away an epigram and never has a laugh caught one unawares. Lord Grey is certainly innocent of flashy and deceiving rhetoric. There is something indecent in the very thought of his indulging in it.

* * *

William O'Brien, that strange, thorny character, was never popular in England as other equally unappeasable Irishmen have been. In the far-off days of the Coercion struggles this austere man used to make the House of Commons uncomfortable with his shrill, passionate speech. The House likes to take things lightly; it absorbs its prophets by making them figures of fun. There was no compromise about O'Brien. He typified for the easy-going Englishman all that is angular and fanatical in the Irish temperament. Irishmen understood him, for they knew the tragedy that embittered him. O'Brien would never ask whether this was a private fight or could anyone join in. He would consider the question superfluous. The sterility of mere pugnacity was exemplified in this sincere and passionate friend of his own people. From fighting the English he turned, after the Parnell split, to fighting other schisms than his own. He was restless and gifted with an extra-

ordinarily bitter tongue, and wherever he was there would be trouble. His death recalls for a moment "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago," and how distant and faint they have become.

* * *

My first impulse about the Cavell film is to assume that Sir Austen is right. I have not seen it and do not know whether it is worthy or not, though I should suppose that Mr. Shaw's commendation and Miss Thorndike's participation constitute some guarantee, moral and artistic. But surely Sir Austen was right to listen to the Germans and to come out against the film, which deals with a story that can hardly be presented at all without stirring up international ill-will. I hope that the truculent attitude of the owners of the film—after all, they have a grievance in that the authorities let them spend a lot of money without warning—will not provoke the Government into setting up an indefensible political censorship. My views about war films are that they are too artistic and romantic, and therefore rather glorify war than otherwise. If we must have war films let them be truthful: that is to say, let them be beastly and horrible and act as a warning.

* * *

It is usual to complain of our lack of information about Shakespeare's life, but I have always thought that we know quite as much as we could expect to know about a man who was not a public figure, and who seems to have chosen to glide through life as noiselessly as possible. We do not, for instance, know of what he died. John Ward, the Vicar of Stratford at the Restoration, recorded in his diary (now to be sold) that Shakespeare died from a fever, contracted at a drinking bout with Ben Jonson and Drayton. This is doubtless the local gossip in circulation in the next age after Shakespeare's death, and though there is no proof, there is no reason why it should not be true. In a time before newspapers and biographies, local tradition about a notable man is as reliable as anything we can get. As we all know, the manifold resources of print do not save biographers from the repetition of crass blunders. A great deal about Shakespeare is vague, but we do get a distinct impression that he was a person of social charm, and there is nothing unpleasant in the notion that he got his death in a final burst of conviviality with choice comrades. It is amusing to note the uneasiness of the orthodox biographers when they come to John Ward's entry. They usually mention it with gentle deprecation, and return a verdict of "Not proven." The notion that a great man must be excessively and mercilessly virtuous is very stubborn. I do not know what the Baconians make of it, but I imagine that they would be eager to accept the authenticity of the gossip, as one more proof that the Stratford boor who died of drinking could not have written the plays. Certainly it does violence to one's sense of seamliness to imagine the great Lord Chancellor indulging in a drinking bout, or drinking too much at all, unless he became inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity. Obviously, therefore, Bacon and not the Stratford toper wrote "Hamlet."

* * *

Looking up at the familiar river front of the Adelphi from the Embankment a few days ago I was disgusted to see a disfigurement in progress against which no protest has been made that I know of. The group of buildings as designed by the Adam brothers forms a graceful whole. The long terrace is flanked by two buildings (they are really the ends of two streets), so planned that they complete the effect in the happiest manner. Will it be believed that someone has been allowed to erect a hideous new house or set of offices in front of the architectural feature on the right of the Terrace? The result is to ruin the picture

irretrievably. I can only suppose that in these days of cynical indifference to the classical beauties of London everyone has despaired of saving the Adelphi, so that this new monstrosity, stuck on the face of the Adam design like a blister, is held not to matter.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE OUTLAWRY OF WAR

SIR,—The outlawry of war school in America, whose tenets are so ably analyzed in your article of February 4th and so ardently defended by Mr. Harrison Brown in your issue of February 18th, fail to meet a fundamental difficulty.

War, they say, is at present an institution recognized by international law. International law must be revised so as to ban war absolutely. This is the essence of their proposals, on which they lay enormous stress.

1. It is true that in international law a state at war acquires a certain status known as that of a belligerent, and involving certain legal relationships between itself and its opponents and itself and neutrals. These relationships and the very terms "belligerent" and "neutral" are based on the idea that it is legitimate to make war for whatever reason war was begun, and legitimate to remain indifferent to the existence of war.

2. If war is outlawed a State resorting to war commits an international crime, and so becomes an aggressor or criminal, to be carefully distinguished as such from the victims of aggression and the other law-abiding nations.

3. Now, is an international criminal when war is illegitimate to maintain the same legal relationships with law-abiding nations as those between belligerents and neutrals, which are based on the idea that war is lawful? If so, surely war has been outlawed in words but not in fact.

4. If war is outlawed, is a State resorting to war to be allowed to draw supplies from law-abiding nations, so far as it is not prevented by its opponent and on the same terms as its opponent, although the former is a criminal and the latter a victim of aggression? The world becomes increasingly interdependent and nations at war will become increasingly dependent on the rest of the community, not only for munitions of war, but for food and raw materials and the sinews of war in the shape of loans, and all this material aid and comfort will become increasingly of direct and decisive value to the prosecution of war, since whole nations are now organized for fighting and the distinction between combatants and non-combatants is disappearing.

5. It would seem, in fact, that the "outlawry of war" will remain a mere empty word, not to say a piece of sententious humbug, unless States are willing to outlaw a country resorting to war. How can you outlaw murder if you share a flat with a murderer, continue to receive him at your club and make him your business partner?

6. The outlawry of war school not only refuses to face this difficulty, but, as shown by Mr. Harrison, actually advocates the maintenance of the legal relationships of belligerents and neutrals, while appending to the state of war the abusive title of "international crime." They are led to this position by their identification of any form of international coercion with war and the further refusal to note that by admitting the right of "self-defence" at the discretion of the States concerned and refusing any criterion of what constitutes self-defence or any international authority for applying this criterion they knock the bottom out of their own proposals.

7. It is disingenuous to argue against the principle of international coercion by identifying it with military sanctions and the latter with war. Under the Covenant the States Members of the League are bound to cut off relations with a State resorting to war in defiance of its obligation

to submit disputes to peaceful settlement. This is boycott, an obviously pacific measure, and may even involve pacific blockade. Such measures are analogous to intervention in international law, which should be clearly distinguished from war. Moreover, there is a good deal of legal authority for taking the view that coercion applied by the League against one of its members on the basis of obligations subscribed to by the State against which the action is taken as well as by the rest of the League, constitutes legal execution and cannot be regarded as war, whatever forms the coercion may take.

8. To make the boycott and pacific blockade effective there should obviously be an agreement between the members of the League and the United States on the lines of that proposed, *e.g.*, by Senator Capper, by which the United States would undertake not to protect the interests of her nationals trying to trade with a State condemned as an aggressor by a tribunal whose competence that State had itself recognized. In exchange we might accept the American view of the "freedom of the seas" in wars, if any, where one side was not an aggressor condemned by the League.

Some such agreement, coupled with the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court and arbitration and conciliation treaties, would put a measure of reality behind a declaration condemning war as an international crime. The Borah-Levinson school of thought expounded by Mr. Morrison is a small and rather confused minority among the not very numerous groups in the United States that take an interest in foreign affairs. It seems a pity that their views should be taken too seriously, and still more a pity that they should be made an excuse for attacking the League, which at least has the merit of existing and to which we are pledged by solemn treaty obligations that there is no chance of modifying fundamentally at present.—Yours, &c.,

ROTH WILLIAMS.

Paris.

February 24th, 1928.

P.S.—I would strongly recommend Professor Bruce Williams's excellent book, "State Security and the League of Nations," issued by the Johns Hopkins University Press, where these matters are discussed with great wisdom and learning.

LIBERALISM AND LABOUR

SIR,—I venture to point out a misunderstanding which occurs in Mr. Glen George's interesting letter. So far from "Socialism in our Time" being the "most important tenet of the Labour Party," it is not a tenet at all. The "slogan" in question has been adopted by certain sections of the I.L.P., but has never been endorsed by the Executive of the National Labour Party or the Labour Party Conference. On the contrary, this slogan has been severely criticized by Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Snowden and other leaders. But while we recognize the folly of believing that a complete Socialist community can be evolved in a generation, we hold that even in the immediate future much can be done and must be done in bringing under national ownership and control various great services of public utility. Several passages in the Liberal "Industrial Report" indicate that many Liberals are thinking along the same lines. Why not? Twenty-five years ago the Land Nationalization Society was enthusiastically supported by Liberals and numbered among its Executive members and Vice-Presidents over 100 Liberal M.P.s and ex-M.P.s. If many Liberals a quarter of a century ago were prepared to tackle the difficult and complex problem of the land, can their successors of to-day set their faces like flint against the infinitely simpler nationalization of railways, mines or electricity? In an age when collectivist and co-operative effort steadily advances in our industrial and municipal life, can a progressive Liberal Party afford to go backward instead of forward?—Yours, &c.,

E. N. BENNETT.

Bath Club, W.

RABBITS BILL

SIR,—In your last issue of THE NATION appears a leading article upon this subject in which the use of poisons and snares for the extermination of rabbits is condemned in no light terms. From the sentimental and the humanitarian viewpoints one cannot but agree wholeheartedly with your remarks; but in attempting to rid the countryside of one of the worst and most expensive of its agricultural and silvicultural pests it is unfortunately essential to subjugate to a very large extent all such feelings and to look upon the matter from the economic aspect alone.

With regard to poisons little need be said, because, in any case, they are very rarely used. Occasions where poisoning is adopted successfully are in mountainous districts, where the rabbits make their warrens in rocky knolls impossible of access either by ferret or spade. In such cases a gas attack, pumping cyanogen or prussic acid gas well into the heart of the warren can hardly be considered cruel. There is, of course, no question of selling such rabbits for human consumption, since they are never even seen.

The important point, however, is with regard to snaring. It must be admitted at the outset that there is often cruelty in this method, though the cruelty is partially avoidable by using care in the setting of the snares. We think you have greatly exaggerated the danger to dogs: it is a very small and short-legged dog who could get anything other than a leg entrapped, and the risk of this last is very small. Humans are often tripped, and are perhaps more endangered than dogs. Anyone who has ignominiously bitten the dust full length on the ground by catching his toe in a snare knows what a jar it can give! As a means of reducing the numbers of poor bunny, however, there can be no question as to the value of the method, especially on ground where ferreting and digging are unsuccessful and where the wooded nature of the country renders shooting of limited utility. If the snare be prohibited on such ground we will indeed be hardly off. Provided that the snare is carefully set and firmly attached to a peg, death is rapid in five cases out of six; and, in any case, he is a trapper careless of his own pocket who fails to inspect his snares twice in the course of twenty-four hours.

There would be little hardship engendered by the prohibition of poisons for the extermination of the rabbit, but if the snare be abolished British agriculture will suffer yet another setback, and one which will be cumulative as the rabbit population increases. No, in this utilitarian age we feel that sentiment must once more bend to the wind or else we must suffer gladly the cry of "Your bread will cost you more."—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE B. RYLE.

Hadley House, Pangbourne.
February 25th, 1928.

[Our criticisms were directed to the Rabbits Bill itself, which lays down in Section 1, Sub-section 2, that any rabbits destroyed under the provisions of the Bill shall become the property of the county council, and "shall be sold . . . or otherwise disposed of to the best advantage," and the fact that "poor bunny" may have been destroyed by prussic acid gas, a horror we had scarcely envisaged, before he is sold or disposed of adds to our objection. Why are the gassed rabbits never even seen? It will be the duty of the county council's employees to dig them out and sell them "at the best price reasonably obtainable." As to the snare, we have personal knowledge of two young spaniel dogs being caught in snares set for rabbits and badly hurt. The average terrier's head is not wider than a man's boot, which Mr. Ryle asserts may be caught, and a dog hunting on his own is always likely to thrust his head just where a snare is set. A spaniel is notoriously blind when following a scent. The better placed a snare may be by the trapper the greater peril it is to dogs, who are attracted by the very paths and hedge-gaps frequented by rabbits. Mr. Ryle genially concedes the humanitarian side of the question, but isolates himself in asserting that it is essential to look upon the matter from the economic aspect alone. Is he, then, opposed to Section 1, Sub-section 7, of the Bill, which disallows the use of spring-traps? Our criticism proceeded on the lines

that, if the Government admit that the question should not be looked upon from the economic standpoint alone, they should disallow not only the spring-trap, but the snare, which, according to Mr. Ryle among others, does involve cruelty.—ED., THE NATION.]

"YOUNG WOODLEY"

SIR,—“Omicron's” complaint that the local colour of “Young Woodley” is inaccurate is surely unfounded. Every public school has its particular idiom of slang, dress, &c., and an author has a perfect right to invent his own. If those of “Mallowhurst” do not conform with those of whatever school “Omicron” has in mind, that does not detract from the merit of the play or its production. If “Omicron” does not agree with me, he may, at any rate, be interested to know that the details here are quite authentic, as I was at school with Mr. van Druten, and recognized many familiar things. This also will dispose of his curious delusion that the play's atmosphere was born American and had to be naturalized.—Yours, &c.,

W. MATTHEW NORGATE.

39, Brunswick Square, W.C.1.
February 28th, 1928.

P.S.—The play was produced at (not, as stated, by) the Arts Theatre Club by the Stage Society and 300 Club.

GOTHIC DREAMS

THANKS to “Northanger Abbey,” the ingenious Mrs. Radcliffe is apt to be regarded as a writer who was admired exclusively by foolish young ladies. But Catherine Morland, when she shuddered and squealed over “The Mysteries of Udolpho,” was in excellent company. Learned old gentlemen like Joseph Warton sat up all night to finish it, and it was the favourite book in their youth of the great poets of the Romantic Movement. Nowadays we prefer Mr. Edgar Wallace and Mrs. Agatha Christie. But it is doubtful whether these writers will have as much influence on the poets of the coming generation as Mrs. Radcliffe had on Scott and Byron and Shelley. Mrs. Radcliffe, though undoubtedly a goose, was almost hysterically in tune with the “movement,” and there is an echo in her books of nearly every modulation in eighteenth-century sensibility. Her heroine (she has only one) is Clarissa Harlowe, who was buried in Blair's Grave, and rose again in a dress of the Macpherson tartan, in floods of tears, and murmuring between her sobs odes to the Alps, or the evening star, or her dead canary. But it was the heroine's bloodcurdling adventures in a Gothic castle that constituted Mrs. Radcliffe's chief claim on the attention of her intellectual contemporaries; for in those days the souls of the cultured found in “thrillers” their most satisfying food. So if Mr. Wallace wants to play the same rôle as Mrs. Radcliffe he must entirely alter his procedure, and confine the activities of his crooks and sleuths to coprolitic *monologues intérieurs* against a background by Picasso or Braque.

It was a happy idea of Mr. Rialto's to call his book on the *Schauer-romantik* “The Haunted Castle.”* The Gothic castle was much more than a fashionable background for adventure stories; it was, I believe, the symbol of the eighteenth-century hunger for the “sublime,” which produced Mrs. Radcliffe and was the cause of her being admired by serious people. Mr. Rialto provides us with a minute description of the castle's architecture, a list of its architects from Horace Walpole to Poe, and a complete inventory of its furniture; ghosts in armour, moping owl, phantom voices, and a score of other grisly items, most of which he traces back to Shakespeare. But in his

examination of the sources of the general *Stimmung* he omits to mention the celebrated description of a Gothic church in Congreve's “Mourning Bride.” And in his list of the demoniac lords of the castle there is another curious omission—that of the greatest of the race, Heathcliff of “Wuthering Heights.” Mr. Rialto's learning and industry are immense, but his book is a trifle indigested. It would gain in interest, though it might possibly lose in “soundness,” if the facts were threaded on something one could call an “argument.”

If the Gothic castle really stands for the “sublime,” then the eighteenth century can be regarded as a Childe Roland who never came to the Dark Tower. But it tried very hard. Even Pope nearly tried. In a letter to Mrs. Cowper he confesses that he has long wanted to write a fairy-tale with the technique of a dream. This was rank heresy and almost looks as if he were swerving from his allegiance to the tenets of Hobbes. But, as if frightened by his own boldness, he draws back with the reservation “provided there be an apparent moral to it.” The *Zeitgeist*, however, and the particular bend of a writer's quill are apt to play strange tricks with the first conception of a book, and if Pope had actually written his fairy-tale I do not think it would have been of a kind to make Hobbes turn in his grave. In the meantime a fresh breed was growing up. If one wants to understand the beginnings of the Romantic Movement one cannot do better than study the *obiter dicta* of Herder. I admit it is difficult to believe that there were any Germans in the eighteenth century. But the fact remains that Herder, though a German, was born in 1744, and that he said a novel ought to be like a dream. As it happens, the first of the “gothic” romances, Horace Walpole's “Castle of Otranto,” actually had its origin in a dream; for, in spite of Hobbes, the eighteenth-century writers spent as many hours out of the twenty-four as the Elizabethans or the Lake Poets in riding on chimeras, and even Dr. Johnson's dreams must have been much more “gothic” than the *Runic Odes* that stirred his bile. Perhaps the “sublime,” which such critics as Hurd and the Wartons found in Spenser and Ariosto but not in the ancients, and which they wished to see produced in the work of their contemporaries, was a dream-like atmosphere. Burke says that *terror* is the “common stock of everything that is sublime”; and in our dreams we have often even more terrifying adventures than Emily in “The Mysteries of Udolpho.”

The “gothic age,” which means, roughly, the Middle Ages, was fixed upon as the right background for the sublime. Now the gothic revival is generally identified with the so-called birth of the historical imagination, supposed to have taken place towards the end of the eighteenth century. This expression “historical imagination,” as used by the critics, seems to cover three distinct perceptions: a sense of the past, a sense of period, and the historical imagination proper. But Lucretius had a magnificent historical imagination, and a sense of the past was exquisitely expressed as early as the fifteenth century in Villon's “Ballade des dames du temps jadis.” As for the sense of period, though it was certainly one of the pioneers of the Gothic revival—Gray—who first possessed it, it was for the Tudor, not for the mediæval period. In short, not only should I deny that the Gothic revival was the result of any of these three perceptions, but I should even doubt whether, at any rate in the beginning, it had anything to do with them. Certainly not one of them functions in “The Castle of Otranto.” What the Gothic revival in literature really sprang from was a sense that the past was frightening, a bad dream—the Gothic past, that is to say. But it is because it is Gothic that it is frightening rather

* “The Haunted Castle: A Study of the Elements of English Romanticism.” By Eino Rialto. (Routledge. 25s.)

than because it is the past. Scott in his interesting essay on Horace Walpole commends him for having chosen a Gothic background for the "Castle of Otranto," because he thus produces in the mind of the reader terror, and hence credulity. He compares the terror to that induced by sleeping in an old house in a room hung with trappings of the past.

"The gigantic and preposterous figures dimly visible in the defaced tapestry . . . the dimly seen pictures of ancient knights, renowned for their valour and perhaps for their crimes . . . and to crown all, the feeling that carries us back to ages of feudal power and papal superstition, join together to excite a corresponding sensation of supernatural awe, if not of terror."

But why were the Middle Ages considered more frightening than any other period? Hurd said that the "gothic" writers were more successful than the ancients in producing the sublime because of "the superior solemnity of their superstitions." . . . Scott's "papal superstition" again. I suspect that the Middle Ages were frightening because they were pre-eminently Catholic Ages. For many generations the Church of Rome had exercised a sinister fascination over the minds of Englishmen, at once repelling and attracting them. In the Caroline Poets we find this two-edged emotion at an early stage. To Herrick, the Roman ritual is merely a pretty, comic, though slightly uncanny, game. It is white magic, or, rather, pale green. In fact, it is faerie. The fairies, he says, do "much affect the Papacie":—

"For sanctity, they have, to these,
Their curious Copes and Surplices
Of cleanest Cobweb hanging by
In their Religious Vesterie."

But to Marvell, though still faerie, it has already become more sinister, and the nuns of "Appleton House" might have a stall for their "pastes and balms" in Goblin Market. And so by degrees we come to Lewis's fiendish monk and nineteenth-century "diablerie." This is not to suggest that the craving for the sublime sprang entirely from a sense of the *ambivalence* of Rome. It is merely pushing the symbol a stage back and discovering behind the Gothic castle a Popish church. What lay behind that would take a psycho-analyst to discover; and as the patient would be a couple of centuries instead of an individual, Professor Freud himself might find it a nut too hard to crack.

It is possible that a Popish church was the origin of the most famous of all the eighteenth-century Gothic castles—Strawberry Hill. On Horace Walpole's first visit to Paris the monument that interests him more than any other is the Convent of the Chartreux. While he admires its architecture, its atmosphere sends agreeable shudders down his spine—"its large and obscure hall looks like a combination-room for some hellish council." In short, he reacts to its Catholicism in the typical English way. He sees in it, however, domestic possibilities: "soften the terms and mellow the uncouth horror that reigns here but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. . . ." In fact, 'tis Strawberry.

Well, if this is the true history of Strawberry, it can serve as an allegory of the fate of the Pre-Romantics. They sought the sublime and found the ridiculous. Perhaps the explanation of their failure lies in Pope's reservation, "provided there be an apparent moral to it." In any case, Childe Roland did not come to the Dark Tower till the publication in 1798 of "Lyrical Ballads." And both Tintern Abbey and the baronial hall in "Christabel" are Gothic castles; while Kubla Khan's "stately pleasure-dome" is a palace in a dream.*

HOPE MIRRELES.

*I am aware that "Christabel" and "Kubla Khan" were not actually published till 1816. But "Christabel," at any rate, was written very soon after "The Ancient Mariner."

THE WAR FILM

A PART from the immediate controversy aroused by the banning of the film "Dawn," the public is beginning to show lukewarmness towards the war film, the public, that is, which takes the film in its stride as an incident in the day's shopping or as an evening's relaxation. They are showing that they have a plain preference for the antics of their imported favourites. They prefer to share vicariously the adventures of Tom Mix or the passions of Pola Negri than to watch the slaughter of their fellow countrymen, even when accompanied by the moan of the saxophone and the roll of the tympani.

In other words the public is growing confirmed in the opinion that war, besides being a beastly business, can be a monstrously dull one. The ex-soldier who said that his clearest warning that he was getting drunk was when he found himself talking about the war, merely meant that his inhibitions were then so blunted that he was inflicting dull conversation on his friends. Little wars may provide more adventure than big ones, but to have been a little man in a big war in a little way is not in itself a social qualification. We sent nearly every writer in this country in one way or another to fight in, or more often to look at, the late war, and about four of them came back with a story worth telling. Far from providing much romance, we know that a great war is for the most part utterly wearisome in its prolonged monotony. Every dramatist knows that it is almost impossible to write a good play about a dull fellow. So I suppose it is equally difficult to make a good film out of the mere machinery of war.

There remains the temptation to liven up the whole business with some semblance of a story, to introduce a love interest, and if it is skilfully and naturally done there can be no objection to this. After all, the war period was responsible for a good deal of careless mating, but what the film producer has omitted to observe is that not much of this took place in the forward areas. In "The Big Parade," that stupendous piece of American propaganda, much of the film is occupied in the dalliance of a soldier with a young French woman. The average Tommy who spent months, even years, without casting his eye on anything more attractive than an old Flemish vroom guarding her potatoes would be inclined to think his ally singularly favoured.

The fact is that it is very difficult to introduce "romance" as understood by the film lover into a picture of war without banality, so the producer, faithful to his art, is thrown back on realism, on the presentation of the scenes of battle and preparation for battle. It is this kind of film which, we are informed, is waning in popularity, especially in the provinces. It is easy to understand the attitude of boredom or indifference excited by these pictures, equally to understand a genuine shrinking from any vivid presentation of the horrors of war. But despite these elements of boredom or disgust, large audiences do view these films, and a more interesting speculation is on the nature of the impression made on them. What mental reactions do they produce? Are they as the bitter herbs which, being painted on to the finger tips, are supposed to give young people a distaste for biting their nails? Do they in their coloured presentation of very gallant deeds breed a spirit of emulation in hundreds of thousands of young people? Do they perhaps induce the reflection of the subaltern of 1919 that "it wasn't such a bad old war, after all."

In answer to these questions I think it may be taken for granted that 75 per cent. of the audience are only moved momentarily one way or the other. The most they ever learn from the cinema is an imperfect mastery of

American slang. But I am not at all sure that the other 25 per cent., whom we may consider to be juvenile, should not have their impressions more zealously guarded. This doubt arose after a recent personal experience in a suburban picture theatre.

The film, which depicts "The Somme," is a stark picture of that series of battles, unhampered by sentimental irrelevancies. It is produced on a scale which even to those who took part in the actions seems neither cramped nor unduly artificial. It is singularly fair to the enemy. Indeed, one of the abiding impressions which it leaves is of the heroism and tenacity of the German machine-gunners. It tells its tragic story with great simplicity with little flag-wagging or drum-beating. But its main concern is with death and destruction, and its main scenes show hundreds of British and German troops under fire.

It was at this film that I sat immediately in front of a group of youths and children who laughed heartily as men were shown rolling, dead, into water-logged trenches, and when casualties became so common as to pall, made their own comic relief out of the humiliation of German prisoners in surrender or the struggles of one of our own fatigue-parties floundering in the mud.

It was the late Stephen Reynolds who predicted that the war would appear to posterity as a monstrous and infernal joke. It would seem, if my experiences were typical, that the youth of to-day are beginning to find it so. Amongst those who have never experienced actually or vicariously its horror and its degradation a natural detestation of war is not common. Ridicule is an excellent weapon against the solemn stupidities of militarism, and if our young hopefuls do find matter for mirth in senseless slaughter, however shocking their attitude may seem, it is perhaps not altogether the worst they could take. But the war film—of which we are presently promised more examples, is fulfilling its best purpose in producing that sense of boredom in the younger generation to which I have referred. Boredom, in the intervals of acute fear and discomfort, will be their abiding experience should they ever be called to arms.

J. B. S. B.

THE "VENTURE'S" LAST JOURNEY

WAR fever was running high, and I got a sudden weariness upon me, a weariness of the discordant din of the streets and a loathing for excited people shrieking for war instead of praying that even now peace and goodwill might be restored to Europe. I could not stand the suspense any more, and I longed for the peace and quiet of the country roads; so on Tuesday, August 4th, I went around to Northumberland Avenue and climbed upon The "Venture," Brighton and London Coach.

"This is a bad business," I said to Scarlett the guard, and I remember his reply, "Lor' lummy, what's going to 'appen? "

Once clear of London, I found the relief and rest I wanted, down the road on a summer day. Not till we reached Horsham did we get a sharp reminder that we were on the brink of war. Then a soldier stuck a poster on the back of the coach, to the effect that an officer would on a certain day requisition horses in the Market Place. As a public vehicle the coach had to carry this. That night at Brighton we knew that we would be at war by midnight.

On the next day I travelled back to London by the coach, and I shall never forget it. The day was lovely, but

we were almost alone upon the Brighton Road. Between the towns and villages there was scarcely a soul about; all the people seemed to be in their houses and the doors were shut. As we trotted along, the rattle of the bars and the beat of the horses' hoofs sounded very loud upon the road. We were a small number, Alfred Vanderbilt was driving, and a lady was on the box seat. Then there were the Manager, Charlie Wilson, Syd Scarlett the Guard, and myself, five in all.

The quiet of that long and lonely journey affected us in a peculiar way. We found ourselves talking in hushed voices as though we were in church, and for no apparent reason the coach horn was blown only when necessary, and Scarlett was usually a great performer!

I think we were a little overawed at the thought which kept coming back to us, "England is at war!" But we were a happy little party of coaching enthusiasts. Little did any of us think the years that would pass before we went coaching again! We all thought that the thing was so big that it must end suddenly and soon. As we came into London, the quiet was gone, the noise by contrast was deafening. Pandemonium reigned! Paper boys ran along yelling the wildest and most impossible rumours. The taverns were full to overflowing, and those who could not get in, sang and danced and drank outside. "Right away for Belgium!" someone shouted at us as we drove along the King's Road.

It had been intended to run the coach until August 19th, but when we reached Hotel Victoria, we learned that the horses had already been taken from Vanderbilt's London stables by the military.

So the lady on the box seat and I were the last two passengers to travel by the famous "Venture" Coach upon the Brighton Road. I never saw Alfred Vanderbilt again.

ROLAND STURGIS.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

IT is a long time since I have enjoyed myself so much as I did at Strindberg's "Comrades," which is being given at the Everyman Theatre. I may be prejudiced by an admiration of long standing for this particular play. But I was not disappointed. Strindberg put less "pep" into "Comrades" than into some of his other works which makes it possible to treat the play as a comedy, if you will a farce. Go to "Comrades" to laugh though it be a little wryly, and you will not be disappointed. Mr. Malcolm Morley, the producer, has been extremely clever over the whole affair and gave a delicious tone of comic eccentricity to the play. There was "no damned nonsense" about the production, yet many ingenious inventions, such as the military couple and the two young ladies of bad reputations, whose rôles are barely indicated in the text. Miss Pamela Carme, as the chief comrade, has been criticized. Personally I do not see how her performance could have been bettered. She brought out the full horror of the part with great economy of means. Miss Margaret Yarde, as a woman who had fallen in the world, was screamingly funny and at the same time got beauty into a small passage with her former husband (well played by Mr. Herbert Lomas). But all the cast acted well together. It is to be hoped that "Comrades" will not be destroyed by what was, I think, an "unfair" Press.

The production of "Richard III." at the Festival Theatre, Cambridge, last week marked a step forward in the treatment of Shakespeare, and, indeed, in the art of the stage. No attempt at theatrical illusion was made; actors addressed their asides individually to the audience, and there were no stage properties. The setting was three-dimensional, and both the auditorium and the steps lead-

ing to the stage were used for the action. Multiple levels proved surprisingly effective in giving characters their right values visually; while a revolving stage set with coloured blocks enabled a miraculous continuity to be preserved in the last act. Altogether a valuable and interesting experiment—though as a production of this particular play lacking a little in force occasionally. There are certainly great possibilities in this method of producing Shakespeare.

Miss Gloria Swanson is one of the few film stars who does not depend entirely on what the Americans call "It" (alias "sex-appeal"). We do not, of course, hint that she does not possess that valuable quality—and great personal beauty as well—but she can also act; she does not insist all the time on being merely the "star," and is willing even to make a fool of herself, if the occasion demand it. She is at present to be seen at the Capitol Theatre in "Sadie Thompson," a film adapted from Mr. Somerset Maugham's play "Rain," in which she gives an extremely good rendering of the young woman of easy virtue from San Francisco, stranded among missionaries on a South Sea island during a week of tropical rain. She is gay and amusing, coquettish and passionate, cringing and hysterical by turns, and with equal conviction. The nervous effect of the continual rain is necessarily, in the film, to a great extent impracticable; a happy ending is ingeniously contrived by making her admirer, Sergeant O'Hara, into a serious lover, and allowing her to marry him at the end; but even with these modifications it makes a good story. Mr. Lionel Barrymore acts very well as Hamilton, the reformer, who manages at first to convert Sadie and then spoils it all by succumbing to her charms, and committing suicide.

The film version of Miss Margaret Kennedy's "The Constant Nymph" has been made by the English firm of Gainsborough Pictures, and is at present to be seen at the Marble Arch Pavilion. Both Mr. Adrian Brunel, the producer, and the cast are to be congratulated on a film which is well constructed, well photographed, and well acted; whether one likes the story, or finds any of the characters sympathetic, is another and a personal matter, and if one does not, then the film becomes rather a depressing affair. Mr. Ivor Novello, as the young musician Lewis Dodd, acts with much more vigour than usual, and at moments with real power; his display of bad manners and insensitive unpleasantness at his unfortunate wife's musical party is both painful and masterly. Miss Mabel Poulton, as Tessa, is at times charming, but has hardly enough force of personality to save her, at other times, from an air of rather tiresome priggishness. The scene of her death, however, is acted with restrained and moving simplicity. Miss Mary Clare is admirable as the blowsy stepmother, as are Miss Frances Doble as Florence and Mr. Tony de Lungo as the servant Roberto, and there is some good comic relief by Miss Elsa Lanchester and Mr. Harold Scott at the party.

"The Queen was in the Parlour" (at the Stoll Picture House), which is shown by the Gainsborough Company, is a not very interesting film after the not very interesting play by Mr. Noel Coward. The story is not a particularly good one, and not particularly well suited for the films. There are too many captions and too much literary material on this occasion. On the other hand, there is some excellent photography of winter sports in Switzerland. Miss Lila Damita, who took the chief part, is very good-looking and a competent actress, but she had not the genius to make the best bricks out of the straw at her disposal. Perhaps nobody could have done so. More exhilarating were some marvellous trick acrobatics by three clowns, which took place first.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—
Saturday, March 3rd.—

Elgar's "The Dream of Gerontius," at the Albert Hall, 2.30 (Royal Choral Society).

Shakespeare's "Coriolanus," A.D.C. Theatre, Cambridge (Marlowe Dramatic Society, March 3rd-10th).
The Budapest String Quartet, Wigmore Hall, 3.

Sunday, March 4th.—

Mr. C. Delisle Burns on "The United States and Peace," South Place, 11.

Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree on "A Way to Industrial Peace," Friends House, 6.30.

Film Society's Film—"Berlin," New Gallery Kinema, 2.30.

"Flies in Treacle," by Mr. C. H. Dudley Ward, at the Arts Theatre.

Monday, March 5th.—

"Back to Methuselah," at the Court.

"The Merchant of Venice," at the Old Vic.

"Young Woodley," by John van Druten, at the Savoy.

Tuesday, March 6th.—

"The Trial of Mary Dugan," by Bayard Veiller, at the Queen's.

Wednesday, March 7th.—

"From Morn to Midnight," by Georg Kaiser, Gate Theatre Studio.

Thursday, March 8th.—

Miss Edith Sitwell on "Modern Poetry in general and Sitwellian in particular," Essex Hall, 6.30.

OMICRON.

CLAMOUR

OVER the yellow arm of down
I lay and watched the teeth of tide
Wounding the sea-scarred shore again,
While at my beating side,
Sweet Unimpressible,
Colossal by your tongue—you lay!
Prattling about the shipping in the bay.

And from your mouth, mouth-pressed a hundred times,
I knew that men were fools, clamouring and getting not,
Kissing to cover up their groans.
And suddenly at your side, hot
With your pulsed companionship, I lay
And shut you out, and kissed dark earth,
Passionately bleak against your voice and ships and bay.

H. E. BATES.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE ATHENÆUM, February 26th, 1828.

JAMES HOGG, THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

THE shepherds of the Southern Highlands of Scotland, from whom Hogg is sprung, and amongst whom he has passed his life, form a class unique in Scotland, and unparalleled in the range of European society. They are thinly scattered over the country, and pass their days in solitude and seclusion: their cottages are often miles asunder; and during the inclemency of winter, they may be debarred for months from social intercourse, by the wreathing snow that chokes up their pathways, while even in summer their time is spent in lonely watchings on the hills, and their meetings are few, save when on the morning of the Sabbath they assemble at the church in the valley. . . . It is seldom that you can encounter a shepherd upon the hills, that he is not busily occupied with a book, whilst his plaid, thrown across his arm, shelters the beams of the sun from the page over which he has lain down to ponder; and every idea he is imbibing takes a tinge from the sublimity or beauty of the scenery by which he is surrounded. From this daily and uninterrupted stream of knowledge, they derive an acquaintance with literature and the world, unparalleled in any equally humble class of any country in Europe, and excelled by few in the higher walks of life.

OPERAS.

LYRIC THEATRE, Hammeramith. Riverside 3012.
EVENINGS, at 8.15. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.
"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA."
(For a limited number of weeks only.)

THEATRES.

ALDWYCH. (Gerrard 2304-5.)
Nightly at 8.15. Matinees, Wed. and Fri., at 2.30.
"THARK."
TOM WALLS, Mary Brough, and RALPH LYNN.

AMBASSADORS. (Ger. 4460.) EVGS., 8.40. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
OWEN NARES in "TWO WHITE ARMS."
By HAROLD DEARDEN. LEON M. LION'S PRODUCTION.

APOLLO. (Ger. 6970.) At 8.30. Mats., Thur. & Sat., 2.30.
"QUEST."
HEATHER THATCHER. HUGH WAKEFIELD.
"THE PLAY OF 330 LAUGHS."—Daily Mail.

COURT (Sloane 5137.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., THURS., SAT., 2.30.
"MACBETH." (In Modern Dress.)
MONDAY NEXT, 6 p.m., "BACK TO METHUSELAH," by Bernard Shaw.
Parts I. and II.

CRITERION. (Ger. 3844.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., TUES. & SAT., 2.30.
"MARCH HARES."
ATHENE SEYLER, LESLIE BANKS, and HILDA TREVELYAN.

DRURY LANE. Evgs., 8.15. Wed., Sat., 2.30. LAST WEEKS.
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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

PHANTASMAGORIC LIFE

IT is not an easy thing to write a good book about Henry James, as many people have proved by failing to do so.

One of the difficulties is that James's style is as infectious as influenza, and that nearly all his critics write about him as if they were parodying him. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks in "The Pilgrimage of Henry James" (Cape, 7s. 6d.) takes this particular difficulty by the horns. The book is an analysis of James's thoughts and feelings, and when his actual words are not used, Mr. Brooks throws his sentences deliberately into a form in which they might quite easily have issued from the labyrinthine mind of the novelist. I find it difficult enough to read James himself; James, disinterred and rearticulated at second hand in the style of "The Wings of the Dove," has the same effect upon the mental digestion as the remains of yesterday's suet pudding served cold for to-day's supper might have on the physical. However, if one can stomach Mr. Brooks's interrogatory and adverbial style, one finds a good deal to repay one, for his book is an intelligent, and sometimes a brilliant and penetrating, study of Henry James.

* * *

The novels, from "Roderick Hudson" to "The Golden Bowl," raise that most puzzling of æsthetic questions, the relation between matter and form. It is a merit of Mr. Brooks that his analysis brings out so clearly the peculiar way in which this question is raised by Henry James's development and achievements. James had the psychology of a romantic of 1820 added to what I imagine must have been the psychology of the Wandering Jew. The legend of the Wandering Jew was invented prematurely before the discovery of America. It is notorious that Jews are the last people to experience any difficulty in finding a spiritual home; they find it where they are born, and nostalgia of the spirit is not one of their virtues or vices. But a large number of intelligent Americans appear to be born spiritually wandering Jews; they are not at home in the intellectual and æsthetic atmosphere of New York or even Boston; they feel in their blood the call of the ancient civilizations of Europe, and you meet them wandering in London drawing-rooms, sitting with artists in Parisian cafés, staying in villas on the hills round Florence, or meditating on the Palatine in Rome. Henry James was one of these detribalized Americans. He listened to the call of Europe; he started to wander, at first only spiritually, and at last physically, to Paris, Florence, Rome, London, Rye. He tried to de-Americanize himself completely, to become an Englishman; he "saturated" himself, as he called it, in all that was most English; he naturalized himself; he became an O.M. But he never became an Englishman or ceased to be an American, and the personal tragedy of his life, of which he appears himself to have been aware, was this spiritual suspension in a no-man's land, inhabited only by the coffins of prophets, between two countries, two continents, two civilizations.

* * *

The other characteristic of Henry James was his romanticism. Mr. Brooks quotes from a letter of his in 1872: "It's a complex fate, being an American, and one of the responsibilities it entails is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe," and he remarks truly that "that was the great battle of James's life, and who can deny that he lost it?" He lost it because he was never

able to see Europe as it really was, and he was unable to see Europe as it was because he was a romantic. He had the same attitude towards London society as Catherine in "Northanger Abbey" had towards an ivy-mantled ruin, and he reacted to the idea of a lord or a "great lady" as Byron had reacted to the idea of a Corsair. But the ironic fairies had given this detribalized, disoriented, snobbish, American romantic some other incongruous qualities: an extraordinary psychological acuteness and subtlety, a passionate desire to catch reality and pin it down in a book, and an almost equally passionate interest in literary "form."

* * *

When Henry James started to write novels it was the search for realism which dominated him. The man who ended by writing novels which to most people seem to be completely detached from "reality," to be almost pure "form," for a long time tried to practise what he preached, namely, that "the novel is history," "the form is to be appreciated after the fact," and "the air of reality (solidity of specification) is the merit on which all its (the novel's) other merits helplessly and submissively depend." James's productive life falls into two distinct halves. In the first he practised this romantic realism. The theme is continually repeated; the reality is the wandering American in Europe. This series of novels, which began with "Roderick Hudson" and ended when he began to write "The Awkward Age," is a considerable achievement. As Mr. Brooks says, the characters are often superb. But there is not a single masterpiece in the series; they are very good novels of the second rank. His romanticism probably queered the pitch of his realism, and his failure to become completely an Englishman was largely the cause of his failure to become a great realistic novelist. Meanwhile, he had achieved a mastery of literary form and an extremely characteristic literary method. In his second period, he abandoned the "novel as history" theory, and ceased to make the fact or real life the content of his books. But it is not true, as is sometimes said, that he allowed his method and his style to go on working in vacuo and that there is only form and no matter in the later novels. The content of these books is still life, but the variety of life is exactly described in the most illuminating of all his books, "The Sacred Fount," as "phantasmagoric life." In the no-man's land in which he found himself suspended between America and Europe, between realism and romanticism, between matter and form, he discovered or invented this strange phantasmagoric life of personal relations and psychological subtleties over which his own literary style and form miraculously fitted like a glove. I find, on re-reading "The Sacred Fount," that I still get immense pleasure from the beauty of the fit. And yet at the end something is wrong, because the author himself is still slightly uneasy about reality, just as he is still slightly uneasy at being an American. There is more in Mrs. Briss's remarks than even James himself was aware of:—

"You see too much. . . . You talk too much. . . . I mean you're carried away—you're abused by a fine fancy: so that, with your art of putting things, one doesn't know where one is—nor, if you'll allow me to say so, do I quite think you always do. Of course, I don't deny you're awfully clever. But you build up . . . you build up houses of cards."

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

HARDYANA

Talks with Thomas Hardy, 1920-1922. By VERE H. COLLINS.
(Duckworth. 6s.)

Thomas Hardy and His Philosophy. By PATRICK BRAYBROOKE.
(Daniel. 7s. 6d.)

SOMEWHERE one has heard that man is an ungrateful creature, and, although one hesitates to repeat so dangerous an assertion, yet even some of the noblest and heartiest of our kind have lent it colour. The late Mr. Hardy, for instance, who was the chief literary figure of the world during the last twenty years, appeared to have no lively enthusiasm towards the projectors of works intended to explain his own works, or to tidy up his reputation, or to admit the public to his study, writing-desk, tenements, messuages, and private lucubrations whatsoever. A strange perturbation in nature! Here was a man of the most open friendliness, who had presented to the world the immense estate of his imagination, and who nevertheless seemed very shy of assisting popular guide-books, indicating the secret allusion of this cypress-grove, that statue, and the economies practised in order to acquire Egdon Heath for the property. Mr. Hardy has been observed to grow quite gloomy and silent when details of such addenda have been offered him. One day a gentleman was dilating on his plans for a study of the modern novel, and shortly he gave way to an emotional climax—"But I may say, Mr. Hardy, that my book will be mainly about yourself!" The victor-victim looked mysteriously on his volunteer laureate, but said nothing. It was much the same when a lady (probably the nine hundred and ninety-ninth) congratulated him warmly on his wonderful books—his immortal novels. "I haven't published a novel for twenty-five years," replied that thankless old man. "Well," said the other, with all the influence of a charming intensity, "I will say that when you did write novels they were the best in the world." A pause; then Mr. Hardy showed himself ready for a new topic.

Several intimations of this same Hardyan apathy or suspicion concerning Hardyana are to be collected from Mr. Collins's "Talks with Thomas Hardy"—six conversations, dated from 1920 to 1922, and copied down with evident talent for a very difficult undertaking. The first allusion in point was Mr. Collins's, speaking of "a bicycle tour in Wessex, visiting some of the places mentioned in your novels, with the help of that book of Windle's, illustrated by New." Mr. Hardy did not confirm that particular help, recommending without interval the book by Hermann Lea. Later on, he explained why he approved of Mr. Lea as a guide: "The result of my coaching. I impressed on him that no place is taken exactly from an existing one." Next we come to a little constellation of disapproval. "I am reading," said Mr. Collins, "that study of your work by Mr. Hedgecock." "Oh yes. Mr. Hedgecock came here once." "His bibliography," Mr. Collins continued, "mentions a Hardy Dictionary by Saxelby. I thought of buying it. I suppose you know it." "I should not recommend you to buy it. It is merely a list of characters. I can't think why anyone should do such a book . . ." The visitor: "Mr. Hedgecock also refers to Sherren's book, which I thought of buying." "It is merely a guide-book—not anything as good as Hermann Lea's." And, again, Mr. Collins: "Has anyone ever suggested a glossary of the dialect words which appear in your books?" "No. There are not very many." As time went on, Mr. Hardy's objections to the pious cares of Mr. Hedgecock outlined themselves quite sharply, in connection with a notion of Mr. Collins for producing an English version of Mr. Hedgecock's "Thomas Hardy: Penseur et Artiste." There is an unusual flow of eloquence from the Penseur: ". . . His dissection would not be in good taste while I am still alive, even if it were true. But it is based chiefly on characters and incidents in the novels that are pure invention. . . . One unwarranted assumption after another." In vain did Mr. Collins put up Lionel Johnson's book as a possibly congenial referee. "I thought it was foolish to reprint it. It was written so many years ago. . . . Lane is having a chapter added on my poetry. But that is out of proportion."

These and similar symptoms make one wonder whether Mr. Hardy apprehended Hardyana preparing in Mr. Collins's mind, and whether he would have added these "Conversations" to his little Index. Probably he would have seasoned his opinion of their general want of weight and range with a kindness for the recorder's hero-worship. It is historically of some value even to have Hardy's "Yes" and "No" and "I suppose it does" on paper; and occasionally Mr. Collins was the recipient of more expansive observations. Mr. Braybrooke's volume contains speculations and marginalia to several of Mr. Hardy's writings, not excluding the poetical part, often curious and vigorous, but none too precise in expression. "Rather unexplainable," "rather incredible," "There is always that certain kind of epic aloofness of Tess," are typical touches of a mannerism which scarcely assists philosophic analysis. Yet Mr. Braybrooke has the merit of letting cheerfulness frequently break in, and will perhaps escape the definition of many providers of Hardyana:

"Fate shall not shake thee off with all its power,
Stuck like a bat, to some old ivy'd tower."

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

THE GREAT GAME

Nova Francia: A Description of Acadia, 1606. By MARC LESCARBOT. Translated by P. ERONDELLE, 1609. Introduction by H. P. BIGGAR. The Broadway Travellers. (Routledge. 12s. 6d.)

Dr. Charles Burney's Continental Travels, 1770-1772. Compiled from his journals by C. H. GLOVER. (Blackie. 10s. 6d.)

Travels in Tartary. By ÉVARISTE-RÉGIS HUC. Edited by H. ARDENNE DE TIZAC. Translated by W. HAZLITT. (Knopf. 10s. 6d.)

Wanderers: Episodes from the travels of Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley and her daughter Victoria, 1849-1855. By MRS. HENRY CUST. (Cape. 12s. 6d.)

MANY a reader, pausing in desperation at the bottom of a tedious page of old travels, must have asked himself why he perseveres with the garrulous, awkward stuff; but before he has answered this question another surge of the tide which has borne him so far will turn the page, and so he is swept on to the end, mightily refreshed without knowing why. The information he may reject as inaccurate, the speculations as jejune, and even the prodigies may cease to amuse. What he accepts and rejoices in is the harsh and strong pulse of life which once beat in a man who did not know what crouched beyond the sea-line or the next turn in the forest track, and has preserved its rhythm against all the botchery of an undisciplined pen. It is somewhat thus with Marc Lescarbot, of the company of Hakluyt and Purchas, a portion of whose history of the French voyages to North America is now reprinted in "The Broadway Travellers." This French lawyer, learned, witty, pious, evangelical, a lover of good cheer and a hater of the Spaniards, made a voyage to Nova Scotia in 1606. The expedition came to an untimely end through withdrawal of the Royal patronage, but not before Lescarbot's keen and speculative eye, directed upon the American coastal tribes, had gathered such store of curious facts as was later, in the seclusion of his classical library, to be the foundation of several copious volumes. Lescarbot's pen is, indeed, not unskilful, but it never knows where to stop. A Master Nicholas Aubry has only to be lost sixteen days without food in the woods of Port Royal, and his enthusiastic chronicler ransacks history for records of fasts (both of those with mouths and of those without them) in order to prove that Master Aubry's survival was a marvel of the first magnitude. This passion for Biblical and classical parallels is held in check in the first part of the book, which contains a lively account of the voyage and some marvellous speculations on the origin of various meteorological phenomena; but in the second part, which is a disquisition on the manners and customs of the Indian tribes, it blossoms without limit in vast labyrinthine sentences. If the reader travels hopefully through these, he will have his reward.

Nearly two hundred years pass, and Dr. Charles Burney, father of the famous Fanny and soon to win fame himself as the author of a large "History of Music," makes a journey in a narrower, drier, more formal world. He was searching, not the unknown, but merely European libraries, opera

houses, and churches for materials for his history. Armed with letters of introduction and chatting with mathematicians about astronomy and electricity, he toured France, Italy, and the Empire. On his return his published journals, stuffed with musical detail, were a great success. But time brings his own preferences. Dr. Burney's journals are now unreadable, his celebrated History is known only to expert contributors to "Grove's," and Mr. Glover is quite right in preparing a memorial of his travels which shows us, first and foremost, the always interesting figure of an English gentleman of Johnsonian constitution experiencing the satisfactions and inconveniences of foreign travel. Dr. Burney managed a surprisingly friendly interview with Rousseau, he called rather nervously on the cadaverous Voltaire at Ferney, he was vigorously entertained at the Court of Maria Theresa, and (greatest triumph of all) he heard Frederick the Great play the flute. Mr. Glover has retained interesting musical detail of a time when Haydn was supreme, Beethoven a baby, and Mozart a small boy, when male altos were still surgically produced, and the woodwind of even the Mannheim Orchestra was seldom in tune. But it is Dr. Burney fulminating against the rapacity of innkeepers and postilions, the villainous roads, the springless post-chaises, and the prying customs; Dr. Burney allowing himself, to his lasting regret, to be floated down the Isar and the Danube with miscellaneous merchandise on a sort of raft; Dr. Burney barely surviving the Channel crossing—which make a success of this pleasant book.

News out of Tartary is now fairly frequent and nearly always astonishing, but the record of the journey of two young French priests, which set Paris and London by the ears in the middle of the last century, is not likely to be superseded in point of accuracy or literary merit. An abridged French edition is now being prepared, and the first part of the younger Hazlitt's excellent translation, revised in accordance with this, has now been reprinted. This pioneer pastoral journey of Père Huc and Père Gabet is classic both in action and narration. Being themselves simple, hardy folk, they set out eastward through Chinese Mongolia with a few camels, a tent, and a native boy rejoicing in the name Samdadchiemba, resolving to live the nomad life of the steppes. They came to know most of the odorous details of a Mongolian encampment; and by dint of sharing the lice, the cold, the thirst, and the primitive courtesies of the natives, whom they thoroughly respected, they gained a valuable and substantially accurate knowledge both of the nomad life and of the lama communities which prey upon it. Père Huc's narrative is simple, modest, brief, and gravely humorous. He will give you the fun of a Tartar inn in a few sentences, and more is to be learned of the Mongolian outlook by Père Huc's delicious description of how he contrived not to eat a pound of fat from a sheep's tail, when he was presented with this ultimate emblem of his host's esteem, than from many pages of learned argument. It is notable that no good word for the Chinese—whose sly rapacity is always contrasted with the frank simplicity of the Mongol—is to be found in this book. Père Huc's picture of Mongol exploitation by the Chinese is not a pretty one, and those who rebut the view that the Chinese are merely the helpless victims of Western commercial aggression will find some ammunition here.

Mrs. Henry Cust's account of the travels of her mother and her grandmother is a very delightful family affair, and will be a rude shock to those who envisage the state of the early Victorian lady as one of static and clinging domesticity. Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley was neither static nor clinging, and she had no intention of allowing her daughter Victoria (twelve years old, delicate, and in need of hardening-off) to be so. There is something romantically gallant, hazardous, and absurd about the globe-trotting of this vivacious pair at a time when globe-trotting, even for the rich, was highly uncomfortable. For some reason which does not appear, Lady Emmeline's aim in life was to cover as much ground as possible. The harder it was to get from A to B, the more determined she was to accomplish it, and she usually had money and energy enough to get her way. Add to this that both ladies had considerable powers of expression and appreciation; that they wrote and drew voluminously and wittily in the most admired superlatives; that they journeyed from New York down through Mexico

and across the Panama Isthmus to Peru and back when the Civil War was brewing and at the height of the gold rush to California; and that their descendant has inherited their talent for being witty without being brief—and it will be appreciated that there are riches enough within this humorous dust cover. The book in its earlier parts has an atmosphere of "The Young Visitors." Whether they are racking down the Mississippi in a sportive steam packet whose boilers are much too thin, or traversing Panama tracks which are much too cavernous on mules whose wills are much too strong, they face the costliest of nature's dodges with bright-eyed surprise and match them with literary dodges of equal richness. Later, the rosy colours darken and the travellers themselves seem to fill out and grow up. They were pitiful and indignant at Constantinople during the siege of Sebastopol. When they set out from there to Egypt and Palestine, their amazing luck deserted them, and the narrative ends tragically with a reckless journey from Jerusalem into Syria, during which the elder traveller, already crippled, died from dysentery, and the younger barely escaped with her life.

BARRINGTON GATES.

A QUESTION OF TASTE

Contemporaries and Snobs. By LAURA RIDING. (Cape, 7s. 6d.)

It is natural that the recent irruption of the amateur into literature, which is due both to the difficulty of obtaining employment and the facility of modern education, should invest itself in the colours of revolt. There is much in tradition which is hostile to second-rate intelligence; at the same time many of the best writers of the time are revolutionary and their example justifies imitation. A new class of writers, unknown before in the history of literature, has therefore sprung up. For every poet who writes because he *can*, there are several hundred who write because they *must*: and who also write a great deal to explain why they must. For



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every volume of poems which the amateur produces he must also produce a couple of large books in order to elaborate, no matter how tortuously, some scale of values by which his work or that of his friends can be judged as anything more than mediocre. Never has poetry bowed under the weight of such a ponderous superstructure of critical pedantry. Almost every word which had any significance in criticism has entirely lost its meaning through being defined so carefully, so often, and so differently. Though the actual, rather meagre, quality of contemporary verse remains unchanged by it, the vast mass of critico-philosophical vegetation which grows out of it and feeds on it, increases daily in quantity and formlessness. As far as it has any recognizable tendencies it attempts to disintegrate or paralyze all those critical values which belong to "concrete intelligence," and are therefore most dangerous to it. The great thing is to rob criticism of any meaning and critical values of any sense. The writer usually begins by denying the concrete intelligence and invoking the aid of the inapprehensible and the "unknowable." Mr. Wyndham Lewis recently made a very thorough analysis of this type of mind in "The Revolutionary Simpleton," and he diagnosed very clearly, if not gently, the various forms in which it manifests itself.

Miss Riding begins in the time-honoured manner by attacking the "concrete intelligence" which she conceives as being not only hostile to herself but also to "poetic intelligence." She cannot regard these two intelligences as being merely independent of one another, yet capable of utilizing one another. She even makes war on the meaning of words, which are the very signs of the intellect, and succeeds in depriving her own words of most of their significance by means of a specialized formula of definition. Everything defined by Miss Riding is either the essence of what it isn't, of the antithesis of what it is. By means of this facile and rather vulgar habit of paradox she succeeds in escaping quite easily into the "unknowable." Laforgue's is an "intellectually non-intellectual intellect." "The composition has a theme because it has no theme." "Romanticism is the difference of the sameness of composition." Things "become more than certain . . . when they are purely problematical." Poetry is "a meaning at work in that which has no meaning." "Concrete intelligence suffers from the illusion of knowledge." "Poetic intelligence is an illuminating ignorance." She is eternally talking of "accurate sensations of the unknown," or "a comprehension of the unknowable." Similar instances of muddle-headedness swarm on every page.

In her first essay she studies the various means employed by contemporary poets to "escape" from the "Zeitgeist." But she ignores the two commonest and most abject methods of escape. The first is the escape into the "unknowable," from which point of vantage it is so easy for the disgruntled minor poet to dun the public for appreciation in the name of "posthumous" fame. The second is the artificial assumption of the infantile consciousness by adult minds. We have been familiarized with this type of escape by Sir James Barrie, Mr. De la Mare, and Mr. Graves. Fundamentally, their Peter-Pannishness is the same as that of Miss Stein and Miss Anita Loos. Between the two groups there is no boundary worth the name, unless we call it Mr. Graves. The former write like infant prodigies with a certain amount of skill, the latter like normal children. In the second of these essays Miss Riding undertakes to explain Miss Gertrude Stein and the "new barbarism": but she does not tell us anything we did not know before. If there is one good quality about Miss Stein, it is her perfect simplicity and understandableness. Miss Riding's explanations are somewhat superfluous. She says of Miss Stein (and we agree) that "she is a large-scale mystic, she is the darling priest of cultured infantilism to her age—if her age but knew it." Alas, we know it only too well.

In the third and last of these essays, "Facts in the Case of Monsieur Poe," Miss Riding attacks what she considers to be a Poe-cult; but she throws no new light on Poe. This would be more than we could reasonably expect from a mind which cannot distinguish between Pope and Ambrose Phillips. Poe's bad qualities as a man are not so subtle, however, as to defy her intelligence, and she makes the most of his weaknesses and failures to paint a miserable enough portrait of him. Miss Riding does not "suffer from

the illusion of knowledge," or taste. She finds it safer to classify than to select. She classifies poets according to their periods, and poems according to their length. She dismisses Goethe, Byron, and Pope because they won the appreciation of their contemporaries and were therefore not of the "post-humous poets." Poetic merit is too "snobbish" a criterion for Miss Riding. She has only one form of argument, and that is the reiterated use of the epithet "snob." Mr. Eliot is a "snob" for liking Poe, and Miss Sitwell for liking Pope. In fact, it is gross "snobbery" for anyone to have better taste than Miss Riding.

ROY CAMPBELL.

GROVE'S DICTIONARY

Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Third Edition, edited by H. C. COLLES. In five vols. Vols. III., IV., and V. (Macmillan. 30s. per vol.)

THE special features which distinguish the third edition of this valuable and important compilation from its predecessors have already been discussed in our review of the first volumes, and it is consequently unnecessary to refer to them again here. It is sufficient to say that in general serviceableness it represents a distinct advance, and that the volumes before us maintain, on the whole, the high level of scholarship which the earlier ones had already led us to expect. As the work draws to its conclusion, however, certain unwelcome features, which were hardly noticeable at first, begin to assume disquieting proportions; blemishes which at first appeared to be merely of the accidental and incidental kind inseparable from an undertaking on such a large and ambitious scale are now seen to be, on the contrary, the outcome of a definite policy and method. The most important of these concerns the numerous articles dealing with the work and personalities of living musicians, and particularly those of British nationality. In the first place, it might well be questioned whether such articles should be included in a work of this kind; but even admitting their

By Appointment Hard Lawn Tennis Court Makers to H.M. The King.



DAVIS CUP MATCH. GREAT BRITAIN AND SWEDEN, MAY, 1927, ON EN-TOUT-CAS COURTS AT TALLY-HO CLUB, BIRMINGHAM.

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necessity or desirability it would surely have been much better to have rigidly confined their scope to a mere impersonal statement of facts, dates, and similar information, and to have spared us the vapid and fulsome eulogies of the after-dinner speech variety, which are of such distressingly frequent occurrence in these pages, and possess no higher critical value than the ritual chant of "For he's a jolly good fellow," with which such functions invariably conclude. The worst offender in this respect, it may be observed, is the Editor himself (we were about to say the Chairman). Such things are not merely in rather bad taste, but also tend to detract from the high level of critical detachment attained in the best contributions, such as the admirable essay on César Franck by Dr. Harvey Grace, for example.

In general we may say that the nearer the times dealt with, and the greater the extent to which æsthetic judgments tend to usurp the place of historical statement and scientific analysis, the more unsatisfactory the work becomes. Up to and including Beethoven one has little fault to find; as we approach the present day, however, a definite *parti pris*—quite unconscious and unintentional, no doubt—on the part of the Editor and his collaborators, makes itself increasingly felt. Probably this is to a great extent unavoidable; man is a political animal, even in matters of art. Still, we venture to think that, without demanding any superhuman degree of impartiality, the scales might have been more evenly held. For example, could it be seriously maintained that the relative importance of Elgar, Vaughan Williams, and Delius, is fairly represented by the allotment of fifteen columns to the first, eight to the second, and a mere four and a half to the third? Or, to go back to a slightly less controversial comparison, that Dvorák merits seventeen columns, but Moussorgsky less than six, and Tchaikovsky thirty-one, but Balakirev and Borodin only three apiece? Or, further back still, that Mendelssohn and Schumann should be given no less than sixty and forty full pages respectively, Wagner thirty, and Berlioz and Liszt only six and nine?

Such things as these are of too frequent occurrence to be merely accidental, and reveal the presence of a definite critical prejudice on the part of the Editor and his colleagues which goes a long way to spoiling the work as a whole. The standard of values adopted throughout, indeed, in the more important contributions at least, is that of twenty or thirty years ago, and has no longer any validity to-day. Nevertheless, with all its faults, the Dictionary unquestionably remains the best work of reference on music in any language, indispensable both to the music-lover and to the professional musician.

C. G.

DEMOCRACY AND THE MOTOR-CAR

Henry Ford. By J. G. DE ROULHAC HAMILTON. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

IDEALS and aspirations change their character according to age. The mediæval crusader served his God, the Elizabethan explorer served his Queen, the modern inventor serves democracy; and, of the three patrons, the last one gives the best return. The name of its hero becomes a household word; instead of being vaguely honoured or scoffed at for an aberrant nobility, it is found inscribed on millions of electric light bulbs or millions of "Tin Lizzies." Henry Ford's aim and achievement have been to democratize the motor-car, and in so doing, one feature of his policy in developing the Ford Motor Company was "service before profit." But democracy, unlike the patrons of those former eras, must be served imperiously. When Model T was adopted, democracy must have only Model T; and the announcement followed that "Any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants so long as it is black." Mass production argues the mass mind; in catering for the collective needs of the general public to the exclusion of the individual whim, Ford showed himself not only in tune with the tendency of the age, but, in his own line, helping to influence and direct it.

The theories and practices of the Ford industries have already been dealt with by Mr. Ford himself in his book, "My Life and Work." This new account is described by Mr. Hamilton as a "simple biography." Fortunately it is not all quite so "simple" as the opening chapters, concerning

Ford's boyhood on a Michigan farm, lead one to fear. It is unedifying to read long discourses on young Henry's partiality to cherries, melons, apples green and ripe, none of which can have appreciably influenced the production of Model T. But Mr. Hamilton's problem has evidently been how to expand his book to the required length without introducing a surfeit of technical detail. The orchard once left behind, he deals more rationally with Ford's gradual progress from amateur watch-repairing to the construction of motor-cars and farm tractors; touching on the industrial system and business methods by which he has become, to the average American, "in spite of ridicule, in spite of hostility on the part of some, . . . one of the most interesting persons in the world."

Ridicule, which has long since selected the Ford car as one of the world's standard jokes, greeted each new proposition of its maker with the words, "It can't be done." Ridicule was only once right in its contention. This was when the Peace Ship sailed in 1916 to stop the War. But it is unfair to dismiss this incident with derision. It shows the manufacturer of fleets of utilitarian motors, possessed for a moment by the aberrant nobility of a former age. The modern industrialist, serving the wrong ideals, was attempting to become a crusader. While Ford cars were being made at the rate of two a minute by a fool-proof and efficient process leaving no margin for miscalculation, their inventor's mind was proving itself neither standardized, nor machine-made, nor entirely fool-proof. The mechanical age has not yet swamped humanity.

SYLVA NORMAN.

THE PROFESSORIAL MANNER

A Study in Public Finance. By A. C. PIGOU. (Macmillan. 16s.)

PROFESSOR PIGOU tells us that his treatise "is designed to supplement my two other volumes, 'The Economics of Welfare' and 'Industrial Fluctuations,' the three books together embodying the main part of what I have to say on general economics." He tells us also that it has been given the title it bears, and not that of "Public Finance," "so as to indicate that not all of the ground customarily covered by treatises with the wider title is brought under review." These explanations may mitigate a sense of disappointment which some readers will experience. If their interest in public finance is primarily that of the student of politics—and this is true of most of those to whom the subject makes its appeal—they will be less concerned with the intricacies of economic analysis than with the objective statement and criticism of certain concrete problems. Is a 4s. income tax hurtful to industry? What, if anything, is there in the project of a surtax? Are the "social services" extravagant? These are the questions to which the average reader expects writers on public finance to address themselves—the questions to which Mr. Churchill, and the thousands of mute, inglorious Churchills whose criticism he has to face, would fain discover the answer. But Professor Pigou has little to give them, for their problems involve limitations, and qualifications, and assumptions, which lie outside the framework of his argument. Their concern is with the particular; his with the universal; theirs with the discontents of His Majesty's subjects in this present year of unrest; his with "what he has to say on general economics." In short, the average reader wants light thrown on problems that are now a part of politics, and in time will become a part of history; while Professor Pigou, whose spiritual affinities are mathematical, offers general solutions which are relevant precisely in so far as their hypotheses are relevant. There is, as a Touchstone would emphasize, so much virtue in If; but some of the Ifs are unfortunately so remote. "Suppose that a community consists of two persons, one normally earning a small income and the other a large income. . . ." A fascinating assumption! But of little use to a Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, poor fellow, must adapt his fiscal technique to the shifting allegiance of millions.

This is not meant to imply that much of Professor Pigou's work is not admirable within its limits, or that a good deal of it is not applicable to questions of immediate interest. Indeed, Professor Pigou falls a little awkwardly between two

stools—avoiding alike the stark remoteness from actuality of, say, a Pantaleoni, and that vivid contact with social phenomena which would endear him to politicians and publicists. He recognizes human frailty to the extent of dealing, at considerable length, with problems that have (or have recently had) a topical interest. But he seeks all the time to provide a solution which is sufficiently general in character to be relevant to changing circumstances, and therefore he cannot frame assumptions which correspond so closely to the facts in which we are interested as to enable us to draw conclusions with certainty.

The practical politician, nevertheless, may read the book with profit; and those who care for economic analysis, always competently, and sometimes brilliantly, performed, will study it with admiration and pleasure.

H. PHILLIPS.

A CASTELLATED RESIDENCE

The Personal History of Walmer Castle and its Lords Warden.
By the MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON. (Macmillan. 28s.)

LORD CURZON'S interest in historic buildings was exemplified during his lifetime by his purchase and preservation of Bodiam and Tattershall Castles. Further evidence of the active and inquiring form this interest took is contained in the present volume. Since Walmer Castle became in the early eighteenth century the residence of the Lords Warden of the Cinque Ports, none held the office for a briefer term than did Lord Curzon. Yet during his short tenure in 1905 he had already begun to gather material for a history of the Castle, which he worked on intermittently in later years. His intention was to present both the human and the architectural aspects of his subject, describing the Castle's structural alterations, and weaving a character sketch of each successive Lord Warden into the narrative of his life at Walmer. This plan had been carried out up to, but not including, the Duke of Wellington's tenancy, for which ample notes had been collected. From these and other remaining papers the history has been completed on a less elaborate scale by its editor, Mr. Stephen Gwynn.

While, therefore, this latter part contains all the necessary information, it is only to be expected that a certain typical oratorical eloquence in the moulding of phrase and narrative should be missed. A more fundamental and particular factor inevitably fades out too. This is that personal enthusiasm for antiquities which had led Lord Curzon to place the Castle itself as foundation and mainspring of his history. The successive stages of its transformation from a bleak military fortification to a "castellated residence, with pleasant surroundings of trees, and lawn and flower-beds, with planted moat and well-arranged policies," were to be given an importance at least equal to the record of its tenants. Thus the new structure added by the first Duke of Dorset to convert a fort into a residence, is described with a thoroughness that includes discussion of an unused rival plan. Again, during the tenancy of William Pitt comes the question of improvements in the grounds, for which Pitt's niece, Lady Hester Stanhope, claims credit. Lord Curzon, unduly sceptical of the lively Hester's capacity for garden-planning, takes pains to cut her share down to a minimum. But it is a little disappointing, after following Walmer's growth by brick and tree, to find an entire new tower has crept in under Lord Granville with only the briefest mention.

As for the dwellers in this "castellated residence," they include four consecutive Prime Ministers, one of whom at least took his duties as Warden with a gravity that invited gibes from unbelievers. For Pitt's wardenship, coinciding with the Napoleonic threat of invasion, found the politician, heroically assisted by that same confident niece, absorbed in military preparations for the defence of his coast. The Duke of Wellington, on the other hand, had no more serious invasion to cope with during his period of residence than that of Queen Victoria into a castle of limited accommodation. The narrative, on its personal side, is devoted mainly to these two men; but Walmer Castle, as connected with their habits and personalities, is still the real hero of the book.

SUNDRY GREAT GENTLEMEN

Sundry Great Gentlemen. By MARJORIE BOWEN. (Lane. 15s.)

IN the publisher's list this book is carefully separated from Miss Bowen's historical romances, and Miss Bowen in a foreword says some harsh things about writers who are not properly chastened with the spirit of historical criticism. There is this indication, further, of serious purpose printed on a fly-leaf: "Let us now praise famous men . . . men renowned for their power . . . all these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times." Ecclesiasticus, 44.

In selecting her glorious gentlemen the author reveals the quality of her insight: one feels that for the great of our times she would go without hesitation to the best society paper and unerringly to the front page.

The first gentleman whose name is made use of walked up and down in the world from 1196 A.D. to 1250 A.D. One might well hesitate to decide who was the most important man on earth between the years of Our Lord eleven hundred and ninety and twelve hundred and fifty: a span from Maimonides and his Abridgment to Robert de Sorbonne. Neither of these, nor John and Magna Charta nor Robin Hood in England, can deflect Miss Bowen's judgment. Not Cardinal Lothaire even: of the House of Frasinumund, Pope at thirty-seven years of age, educated at Paris and at Bologna, lawyer and statesman of exceptional penetration and wisdom, he manipulated the princes of a turbulent Europe to his ends, and, although using the newly established Dominicans mercilessly against the numerous cory-bantic revivalists, he made no mistake about Francis of Assisi—not even Innocent III. can hide from Miss Bowen her quarry, his ward Frederick II. of Hohenstaufen, sumptuous keeper of dromedaries and whores and elephants. Sumptuous is a key word, it appears on almost every page of the book. This last of the Cæsars, as Miss Bowen calls him, has, in her hands, no need of a Marius or a Sulla to prepare his way, no lieutenants like Labienus and Antony. We are shown no great character toiling terribly to achievement, but merely a gaudy monster rising on a series of miracles to glory; only to have from these unhistorical heights a theatrical downfall. "At fifty years of age he had to face a titanic upheaval; every day brought news of some fresh defection, some new revolt, some bitter insult from Pope or friar, some falling off of a faint friend, some pouncing of a malicious foe; he was stripped of all his intellectual pursuits in which he so delighted, his delicious repose, his beautiful courtly pleasures; no more for him the building of alabaster palaces by azure seas, the discussion of obtuse (*sic*) problems with silk-clad sages on marble terraces"—one supposes so much blunt argument reduced him to obmutescence.

"For the last time the ironic light flashed in the grey eyes, the ironic smile on the sensuous mouth, and Frederick, pressing the hand of the weeping Manfred, turned his calm face to the wall, and, on a brief sigh, died."

Don Sebastian of Portugal is killed with more atrocious circumstance. His fair, white body is exhibited stark naked on the back of a mule, gashed, the wrists bound, and the "bright Austrian hair clotted with blood," so that even the Sultan "turns aside his noble face in profound emotion and the Caid's veil their countenances with a gesture of sorrow and regret." All this detail, and the fact that it is not certain that Don Sebastian died in the Battle of Alcazar, give point to Miss Bowen's condemnation of the "romantic tradition of accepting anecdotal tales, which, however often repeated, only rest on dubious evidence and are obviously embellished by fancy."

With regard to Don Sebastian, one notes Miss Bowen's bibliographical note, that "John Dryden wrote a pompous drama on the subject of Dom Sebastiao, which has of course, no historical and little literary value." Others have thought otherwise: Sir Walter Scott, for instance, read Dryden's "Don Sebastian" and wrote: "Shakespeare laid aside, it will be difficult to find a play with more animatory incident, impassioned language, and beautiful descriptions. An observing reader will find symptoms of minute finishing and marks of accurate attention. If anyone is incapable of relishing it he may safely conclude that nature has denied

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him not merely poetical taste, but common powers of comprehending the ordinary feelings of humanity."

Louis XII. of France, Gustavus Adolphus, Carlos II. of Spain, and Maurice de Saxe are the other names used to label similar confections made from the same rich dough with jam on it.

ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

"REPUTATIONS," by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart (Murray, 12s.), contains studies of war leaders, including Joffre, Foch, Haig, and Ludendorff.

A new volume in "The Golden Hind" series is "Sir Walter Raleigh," by Milton Waldman (Bodley Head, 12s. 6d.).

"The Mirage of Versailles," by Hermann Stegemann (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.), is a study of the post-war map of Europe in the light of history. Another translation of a German book which is of great interest to English readers is "Lord Grey and the World War," by Hermann Lutz (Allen & Unwin, 16s.). This is the book which was reviewed at length by Mr. Lowes Dickinson in THE NATION when it originally appeared in German under the title "Lord Grey and Weltkrieg."

The "Subject Index to Periodicals, 1926" (The Library Association, £3 10s.), is, as usual, admirably edited and produced. It is an invaluable work of reference to periodical literature.

"The Revolt of Modern Youth," by Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans (Brentano, 10s. 6d.), is an attempt to describe aspects of American social life revealed to a Judge in the Juvenile and Family Court of Denver.

"Good Evening, Everyone!" by A. J. Alan (Hutchinson, 3s. 6d.), is the fourth edition of a book by an author well known to listeners-in.

The four volumes of "Constable's Miscellany" mentioned in our last issue have not yet appeared. We overlooked the fact that the publishing date is March 8th.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

History of the Great War in Egypt and Palestine. Vol. I.—**Military Operations, 1914-1917.** By LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR G. MACMUNN and CAPTAIN CYRIL FALLS. (H.M. Stationery Office, 12s. 6d. Maps in case, 5s. 6d.)

Another volume will complete this part of the Official War History, and if the standard now displayed is not impaired the result will be entirely satisfactory. The compilers have done their work so far with dexterity of design and masterly simplicity of style; we must notice also the unflinching chivalry of their record. Besides the text, there are copious sketch-maps and several panorama photographs of battle-fields, beautifully reproduced. Probably the passage in this first volume to which most "old hands" will apply themselves most eagerly is that on the failures of Gaza, especially the First Battle, which the official historians discuss more cautiously than many of the combatants. The plain facts are that on the evening of March 26th, 1917, the troops held Ali Muntar, the key to Gaza, and had completely won the action; the German commander in Gaza had sent out wireless messages of complete despair and defeat; but through some imperfect communications at our Headquarters, to the amazement of the front line, a withdrawal was ordered. These main points are illustrated very vigorously in Major Dudley Ward's "53rd Division," lately published, and will doubtless disturb the dreams of the veterans who were "dragged like a dog on a leash, from their prize," for years to come. On this ground only the official history's inevitable restraint will not obtain their sanction.

* * *

Parnell. By ST. JOHN ERVINE. Third Edition. (Benn. 5s.)

Mr. Ervine's biography of Parnell was published three years ago, and was unexpectedly popular. The new edition is a cheap one, and Mr. Ervine has written a new and interesting preface to it. It is chiefly occupied by a reply to the criticism of Mr. William O'Brien. Mr. Ervine defends Gladstone and Morley against Mr. O'Brien, and there is a good deal to say for his view that, given the circumstances and the public opinion and morality of the time, neither of these statesmen can very well be blamed for their action at the time of the Parnell divorce proceedings.

Jên. By MRS. ALFRED WINGATE. (Crosby Lockwood. 10s. 6d.)

Mrs. Wingate has shown ability in the handling of her material. From the wide range and diversity of her work, the two main narratives emerge lucid and significant, both in themselves and in their relation to one another. The action of her story passes between 1229 and 1298, and is, in effect, the history of Mongol empire and conquest, particularly in China. After describing the Mongol campaigns in the west and south, she converges on the acts of Kubilai Khan, who is guided in life by Jên, the principle of man's right relationship with the universe. Parallel with this, there is an account of Marco Polo's travels and sojourn at the court of the Great Khan. The story is ennobled by the beauty and magnificence of these two heroes.

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The best instrumental record is Bach's *Fantasia in C minor* and *Fugue in C minor*, played on the Queen's Hall organ by Marcel Dupre (12-in. record. D1356. 6s. 6d.). Liszt enables two pianists to show their skill. Mr. Arthur de Greef we know on the gramophone, and the *Polonaise in E* is his present choice (D1364. 6s. 6d.). Mischa Levitzki is new to the gramophone, but has a great reputation; he plays the brilliant and popular Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 6, and he plays it with a brilliancy which should make this a popular record (D1383. 6s. 6d.).

Rosa Ponselle, the soprano, sings very well Gounod's luscious "Ave Maria" and Massenet's sentimental *Elégie* (12-in. record. DB1052. 8s. 6d.). We prefer Maartje Offers, contralto, a very fine singer, who seems to enjoy singing the "Bohemian Song" and the "Card Song" from "Carmen" (10-in. record. DA824. 6s.). Evelyn Scotney, however, does not give herself a chance in the absurd "Song of the Nightingale" of Saint-Saëns, and not very much chance in Wolf's "Elfenlied" (10-in. record. E481. 4s. 6d.). Paul Robeson, of "The Emperor Jones" fame, shows that he is a first-rate singer of Negro Spirituals in "Deep River" and "I'm going to tell God all my troubles" (B2619. 3s.).

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UNDERGROUND RAILWAYS

A Correction

In our last issue we inadvertently stated that the Meeting of the Proprietors of the Underground Railways was held at the Caxton Hall, Westminster. The meeting was held at the offices of the Company, 55, Broadway, Westminster.

In the sixth paragraph of our Report the phrase "In the first six weeks" should read "In the first seven weeks," and the increase of traffic receipts should read £193,400 instead of £162,700 as stated.

COMPANY MEETINGS.

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The Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday, February 28th, 1928, at Oxford Street, W. Mr. H. Gordon Selfridge, the Chairman, who presided, said:—

We in this house have played the great game of business during the past year with enthusiasm and energy, and, while the figures are comparatively the best we have ever shown, we regard them, as we do all results in this business, with a "happy discontent"—a discontent which keeps us far away from that fatal error of "self-satisfaction," but one associated with an atmosphere of good cheer and enthusiasm. We never feel we do well enough. And business, while a game, has also become a science, and while, no doubt, many businesses are being run in a more highly intelligent and finished manner to-day than ever before, all systems and methods are subject to improvement, and will always be so as long as men and women think constructively. The old adage of "what was good enough for our grandfathers, &c.," is happily now way below par, and in a generation or so will have been laughed out of existence.

The item "investments in allied companies," including our control of William Whiteley's, may be referred to because the reconstruction of that seventy-five-year-old business and the putting of its stocks of merchandise into good saleable condition has caused something of a loss which, by the terms of our purchase, Selfridge's will, of course, make good. The amount will be in no way serious, and our large holding in that business will, we are sure, prove a remunerative affair. We shall, however, fully earn our share of the future profits by giving it our extreme care in its detail management. We are entirely happy in our relations and control of that business.

The central portion of the Oxford Street frontage containing the main central entrance is now nearly complete, except for a few finishing touches. The building of this section accounts chiefly for the additions to the "costs of building, &c.," item in the balance-sheet. It is also partially responsible for the increased item of mortgages. Included in this item, however, are various additional leases which have been made for further development of the business. Our depreciations continue to be heavy, following out a fixed policy.

Of course, our holdings in the Selfridge Provincial Stores are highly valuable and will show results in our balance-sheet as soon as it seems wise to begin declaring dividends by that Company.

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MARCH, 1928.

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Which gives the higher return?

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or
2. £100 a year (£111 2s. 2d. actual premium, less income tax rebate, £11 2s. 2d.) invested in a 20 years' Endowment Assurance, With Profits, in the Standard?

The following table, for a man aged 25 at entry, shows the value of his estate at death:

At End of Year.	Stock Exchange Investment at 5½ per cent. less Tax.	"Standard" Endowment Assurance.
	£	£
5	575	2,485
10	1,298	2,756
15	2,209	3,058
20	3,355	3,392

(It has been assumed that tax remains at 4s. and that the Standard's Bonus continues at the present rate of 42s. per cent. annual and compound.)

The Standard's moderate premiums and high annual compound bonuses make the Endowment Assurance the more remunerative investment, and in addition, *life cover for 20 years is provided free.*

WRITE TO-DAY FOR THE INTERESTING LEAFLET "R.5" to

The STANDARD LIFE
ASSURANCE COMPANY

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1825

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HEAD OFFICE - 3 GEORGE STREET
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INSURANCE NOTES.

POINTS FOR PARENTS

NO amount of parental care will eliminate the risk of illness and accident to which children are exposed, nor can the occurrence of taints in the family history be prevented. Yet if the children do suffer any of these things in a serious form, they may be excluded from the benefits of life assurance.

Fortunately, under the system of Children's Deferred Assurances, the adverse effect of ill-health or flaws in the family history can, in a large measure, be forestalled, provided, of course, that a policy is effected before these disqualifications manifest themselves. This form of policy is issued by most of the leading life offices. As an example, however, we refer to that of the Canada Life Assurance Company, whose prospectus has just come to our notice. No medical examination of the child is required at any time, and the assurance commences at age twenty-one without regard to the state of health. If the child dies before age twenty-one, the whole of the premiums paid accumulated at 3½ per cent. compound interest would be returned.

In order to illustrate a further important advantage of the Deferred Assurance Policy, two of the dozen or so options available at age twenty-one have been selected from those which require the continuance of the annual premium of £10:—

- (1) A Whole-Life Assurance with profits for £1,208, or
- (2) An Endowment Assurance with profits payable at age sixty or on previous death for £1,048.

If a young man of twenty-one applies to the "Canada Life" for a new Whole-Life with profit assurance of £1,208, he would have to pay an annual premium of £23 8s. Thus the fortunate holder of the Children's Deferred Assurance policy will save £13 8s. a year throughout his life, a saving which at age twenty-one will have a present value of about £260. Similarly, an Endowment Assurance payable at age sixty or on previous death would call for an annual premium of £25 9s. 2d., a difference of £15 9s. 2d. a year for thirty-nine years in favour of the Deferred Assurance.

"WHAT ARE YOU WORTH?"

Among a series of new leaflets which have been issued by the Law Union and Rock Insurance Co., Ltd., are two which are distinctly good. The first is entitled "What Are You Worth?" and in a few thought-provoking paragraphs brings the reader face to face with the question as to how much of his estate will remain after payment of expenses, debts, &c., for the use of his wife and family in the event of his premature death. The title of the second, "He Did Not Die," is taken from a quotation which is attributed to the late Dr. Talmage, who said of a man who left his wife and children unprovided for, "He did not die, he absconded." An arresting thought.

The "Law Union and Rock" has recently joined the ranks of the companies which are prepared to grant life assurance at monthly premiums.

"THE LEGACY OF THE NINE KNIGHTS."

An admirable publicity campaign was recently carried out by the Legal and General Assurance Society, Ltd., "to cement our relations with the legal profession." The campaign was opened by the insertion in the legal Press of a series of advertisements which, with artistic illustration and informative copy, drew attention to the historic memories associated with most of the buildings adjoining the society's offices.

This is an excellent example of how a life assurance business should be advertised. It will be surprising if the result is not a great stirring of interest among barristers and solicitors in the business of this progressive society. The advertisements have been reproduced in a souvenir booklet under the title "The Legacy of the Nine Knights," and, although intended only for the legal profession, the society will no doubt send a copy (if there are any left) to applicants who are interested.

THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

Chief Office—HOLBORN BARS, LONDON, E.C.1.

Summary of the Report presented at the Seventy-Ninth Annual Meeting, held on 1st March, 1928.

The **Total Assets** of the Company now amount to £209,307,690, as compared with £198,801,641 a year ago, i.e., an increase of £10,506,049.

The **Total Income** during 1927 was £39,801,358, as compared with £38,621,753 in 1926, i.e., an increase of £1,179,605.

The **Total Surplus** arising from the Life business, including the sum of £451,779 brought forward, is £8,523,466.

ORDINARY BRANCH.—The number of policies issued during the year was 81,259, assuring the sum of £16,941,000, and producing a new annual premium income of £1,096,556. The premiums received were £11,160,399, being an increase of £56,885 over those for the year 1926.

The claims for the year amounted to £9,371,699.

The number of life policies in force at the end of the year was 1,084,107, assuring with bonus £178,211,064 and producing a premium income of £10,537,113 per annum. The immediate annuities payable were 3,738 in number, and amounted to £148,702 per annum. In addition there were 1,335 deferred and contingent annuities, securing £27,465 per annum by an annual premium income of £12,766.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH.—The premiums received during the year were £16,593,454, being an increase of £510,214 over those for the year 1926.

The claims for the year amounted to £8,455,450. The total number of claims and surrenders was 751,924 on 870,078 policies, of which 219,578 were matured endowment assurances.

The number of free policies granted during the year was 198,700, the number in force being 2,576,389. The number of free policies which became claims was 90,466.

The total number of policies in force in this Branch at the end of the year was 24,779,938, under which the maximum sum assured together with declared bonus was £446,131,942 and producing an annual premium income of £17,279,285. The average duration of the whole life premium paying policies in force exceeds 18 years.

GENERAL BRANCH.—The premiums received, after deduction of the re-insurances, amount to £1,619,010, being an increase of £202,168 in sections other than Marine and a decrease of £134,230 in the Marine, thus giving a net increase of £67,938 over those for the year 1926.

The claims for the year under Fire, Sickness and Accident, Employers' Liability, Miscellaneous and Marine sections amounted to £1,152,976.

The premiums received under Sinking Fund policies were £73,463. The capital sum insured under these policies is £5,687,942.

In the **General Branch** the surplus shown is £178,803, of which £69,663 has been applied to strengthening the Fire and Miscellaneous Reserves, £25,000 has been set aside to meet Income Tax, and the balance of £84,140 has been carried forward. £500,000 has been transferred from the Common Contingency Fund for the purposes of the General Branch in accordance with and subject to the provisions of Clause 130 (B) of the Company's Articles of Association, and this amount has been carried to the Marine Insurance account.

In the **Ordinary Branch** the surplus shown is £3,060,596, including the sum of £192,523 brought forward from last year. This surplus the Directors have applied as follows:—

	£
To the Investments Reserve Fund (which stands as at December 31st, 1927, at £4,750,000)	500,000
Cost of bonus to participating policyholders	2,130,396
Transferred to Profit and Loss account for dividend and bonus to holders of "A" shares	235,311
To be carried forward	194,889

The above stated amount of £2,130,396 is sufficient to provide a bonus of £2 4s. per cent. on the original sums assured, and a bonus at that rate will be allocated to participating policies which were in force on December 31st, 1927.

In the **Industrial Branch** the surplus shown is £5,462,870, including the sum of £259,256 brought forward from last year. This surplus the Directors have applied as follows:—

	£
To the Investments Reserve Fund (which stands as at December 31st, 1927, at £4,000,000)	500,000
To the Common Contingency Fund	250,000
Cost of bonus to participating policyholders	2,916,667
Transferred to Profit and Loss account for dividend and bonus to holders of "A" shares	664,689

Bonus to Members of Outdoor Staff	500,000
To the Special Contingency Fund	366,667
To be carried forward	264,847

A reversionary bonus of £1 12s. per cent. on the sum assured at death or maturity, vesting after 5 years' premiums have been paid, has been added to all with-profit policies issued on or after January 1st, 1923, and on which premiums were being paid on December 31st, last.

All policies issued before January 1st, 1923, which are in force (except those in the Irish Free State), and are entitled to participate under the bonus distribution scheme and become claims by death or maturity of endowment between March 2nd, 1928, and March 7th, 1940, both dates inclusive, will receive a bonus addition varying from £7 10s. per cent. when premiums have been paid for 5 years, to £70 per cent. when premiums have been paid for 70 years.

These bonuses are inclusive of, and not in addition to, those declared in March, 1927, and are guaranteed for a period of twelve years to March 7th, 1940.

In the Irish Free State the surplus is proportionately much less than in the United Kingdom. It has therefore been decided that the above rates of bonus for policies issued before January 1st, 1923, shall not apply to policies in force in the Irish Free State, but such policies will continue to receive bonus at the rates and for the period previously guaranteed.

The total amount which has been allotted under our profit-sharing scheme since its initiation by way of bonus to the Industrial Branch policyholders and outdoor staff is £15,930,709, made up as follows:—

Year.	Outdoor Staff.	Policy-holders.	TOTAL.
From March, 1908, to	£	£	£
March, 1923	805,920	2,960,000	3,765,920
March, 1924	227,642	906,650	1,134,292
March, 1925	387,097	1,719,301	2,106,398
March, 1926	440,945	2,097,737	2,538,682
March, 1927	468,750	2,500,000	2,968,750
March, 1928	500,000	2,916,667	3,416,667
	£2,830,354	£13,100,355	£15,930,709

The important changes in the organization of the work of the Industrial Branch both at Chief Office and among the Superintendency and Agency Staff have resulted in a progressive decrease in the rate of expenditure in this branch from 40.5 per cent. of the total premiums received in 1920, to 25.47 per cent. of those received in 1927.

The scheme adopted in the Industrial Branch in October, 1926, for dealing with arrears of premiums due to unemployment arising out of the coal dispute was taken advantage of by holders of more than 1,500,000 policies.

The four **Prudential Approved Societies** have during the year paid to or on behalf of their members benefits amounting to approximately £5,732,600, making a total of over £39,084,100 since the inception of National Health Insurance. Included in the amount paid during the year is a sum of £1,150,432 expended on Additional (non-cash) Benefits granted as a result of the valuations of the Societies.

The sum expended on each Additional (non-cash) Benefit was as follows:—

	£
Dental Treatment and Dentures	935,944
Hospital Treatment	113,431
Convalescent Home Treatment	13,698
Medical and Surgical Appliances	7,656
Ophthalmic Treatment	79,210
Nursing	493

The number of persons admitted to membership of the Societies during the year was 276,290, of whom 121,798 were men and 154,492 women.

A. C. THOMPSON, *Chairman.*

J. H. LUSCOMBE, } *Directors.*
EDGAR HORNE, }

G. E. MAY, *Secretary.*

F. P. SYMMONS, *Actuary.*

J. BURN, *General Manager.*

The full Report and Balance Sheet can be obtained upon application.

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

"INTRODUCTIONS"—FILM GAMBLES—VICTOR TALKING—RAILWAY PRIOR CHARGES—TIN

IT is difficult sometimes not to be shocked at events in the industrial share markets. "Introductions" are occasionally made without any adequate information being given to the public and before the market has had time to find its level, a thoroughgoing gamble is in progress. Duophones seem to be a fair example. These 10s. ordinary shares were introduced not many weeks ago at about 15s., and have risen rapidly to the present figure of 43s. No estimates of profits have been given, but vague rumours are in circulation about favourable contracts that have been secured. Vocalion 10s. shares on equally vague reports have been pushed to 76s. 9d. It is quite possible that the cheap gramophone record manufacturers have a big market before them, but is a free market being maintained in these companies' shares on the Stock Exchange? Another remarkable introduction is Motor Fuel Proprietary 5s. shares, dealings in which have started this account at 18s. 9d. No estimate of any profits has been given in the statement advertised in the Press. The Company acquires licences to work certain patents of Dr. Dvorkovitz for the extraction of oil from coal. One wonders whether it would have made any difference to the introduction if the patent had been for the extraction of gold from sea water.

The public gets what it deserves. The cry for British films has been followed by an extraordinary number of film production gambles. The Government's Films Bill sowed the seed, and the company promoters have reaped the harvest. The latest, and we hope the last, has been the issue of 170,000 8 per cent. cumulative preference shares of £1 and 170,000 ordinary shares of 1s. by Welsh-Pearson-Elder Films. The Company paid £40,000 in cash and 380,000 in ordinary shares of 1s. for the acquisition of Welsh Pearson, but no statement of the profits (if any) of Welsh Pearson in the last five years was given. It was mentioned that Mr. Elder, one of the joint managing directors, was joint managing director of Stoll Picture Productions in 1925-27, but it was not added that this company had made losses in that period. The abridged prospectus of Welsh-Pearson-Elder Films published in the Press did not disclose the fact that the preliminary expenses of the issue of £178,500 amount to about £30,000 in cash. If this issue is over-subscribed it will be remarkable. We cannot recall any series of industrial flotations since the post-war boom that have been bigger gambles than these issues of British film-producing companies.

Activity has burst out again in the gramophone leaders—Columbia Graphophone, Gramophone (H.M.V.), and Victor Talking. With the payment of a quarterly dividend at the rate of \$4.00 per annum on the common shares of Victor Talking Machine Company, the \$6 convertible preferred shares of that Company take on a different character. We recommended these shares when they were \$88, and again when they were \$96, as an attractive preference share investment with an unusual chance of capital appreciation. They now stand at \$127. At this price (a) the genuine investor might take his profit, (b) the speculator might exercise the conversion rights. The shares yield only 4.72 per cent. at \$127. If the conversion rights are exercised, two common shares are obtained carrying \$4 each dividend, that is, an income of \$8 would be obtained as against \$6. The price of the \$6 preferred shares will continue to be based on, and will fluctuate with, the price of the common, although they may show greater resistance to selling pressure than the common in the event of a New York reaction. The common shares earned last year \$8.98 exclusive of an estimated revenue of \$2.00 from interests in certain foreign companies. The \$4 dividend is, therefore, a conservative distribution, especially as the Company controls the Gramophone Company of England (H.M.V.), which is reported to be making new "records" in profits.

If trustees find it difficult to choose sound trustee securities yielding over 5 per cent., they might now consider the prior charges of some of the home railways in the light of the 1927 accounts. The following table shows the "cover" behind debentures, guaranteed and preference stocks on the basis of 1927 net income:—

		(000's omitted)			
		L.M.S.	L.N.E.R.	G.W.R.	Sthn.
Gross Railway Receipts	£84,383	£64,830	£35,976	£26,703	
Expenditure	68,153	53,719	28,820	21,541	
Net Receipts	16,230	11,111	7,156	5,162	
Miscellaneous Receipts	2,606	1,073	1,378*	1,249	
Net Income	18,836	12,184	8,534	6,411	
Deb. Interest and Other					
Fixed Charges	5,781	4,811	2,553	1,946	
	13,055	7,373	5,981	4,465	
Div. on Guar. Stock	1,628	2,428	1,191	466	
	11,427	4,945	4,790	3,999	
Div. on Pref. Stock	6,846	4,775	1,771	2,035	
	4,581	170	3,019	1,964	
Div. on Common	4,522	159†	2,972	‡2,009	
Balance	+59	+11	+47	-45	

* Includes £91,955 profit on realization of investments.
† On Pref. Ord. ‡ On Pref. Def. Ord.

It will be seen that dividends on the guaranteed stocks were covered 8 times in the case of L.M.S., 3 times in the case of L. & N.E., 5 times in the case of the Great Western, and 9.6 times in the case of the Southern. On the preference stocks the dividends were covered 1.67 times, 1.03 times, 2.7 times, and twice respectively.

The only railway that had to draw upon its reserves to pay its ordinary stock dividends was the Southern, and that only to the extent of £45,000. Taking the four groups together, gross receipts have recovered to the 1925 level, expenditure is 2.4 per cent. less, and net income (including miscellaneous receipts) is 10.1 per cent. greater. The L. & N.E. has made the best recovery. Compared with 1925, L. & N.E. net receipts showed an increase of 20.3 per cent., the Great Western 18.8 per cent., and the L.M.S. 4.6 per cent., while the Southern were practically unchanged. The trustee who holds railway prior charges must, of course, watch the traffic receipts, but he may find some of the yields shown in the next table attractive enough to compensate for the element of risk involved:—

Great Western Railway 5% Guar.	101½	...	5 0 0
London & North Eastern 4% 1st Guar.	75½	...	5 6 0
London & North Eastern 4% 2nd Guar.	73½	...	5 9 6
London Midland & Scottish 4% Guar.	79½	...	5 2 6
Great Western 5% Pref.	99½	...	5 2 0
London & North Eastern 5% 1st Pref.	70½	...	5 15 6
London & North Eastern 5% 1955	91½	...	5 15 0
London & North Eastern 4% 2nd Pref.	65½	...	6 8 6
London Midland & Scottish 4% Pref.	76	...	5 7 6
London Midland & Scottish 4% 1923	75	...	5 9 0
Southern 5% 1964 Pref.	98½xd.	...	5 1 6

Mr. Davenport does a service in calling attention in his pamphlet on "The Price of Tin" to the unnecessarily violent fluctuations in the price of tin. Mr. Layton, in the preface to this pamphlet, remarks that if price fluctuations are an essential part of the system of adjusting supply and demand, speculation is supposed to be an added refinement which makes the system work more smoothly or quickly. Mr. Davenport shows that in the case of tin speculation makes the system work more harshly. The only possible corrective to speculation—full publicity as to output, stocks, and consumption of tin—is absent.

